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Indigenous Democracy!

The leader of Fianna Fail, Micheal Martin, has intervened in the Union Jackery crisis in the North with an article in the *Irish News* (16.1.13). He has the pretence of Fianna Fail party organisation in the North but he does not let it develop. So, when a Fianna Fail Statement has to be made about some issue in the Six County section of the British state, it cannot be made by the indigenous section of the Party in the North. It must be made by the leader of the Party in another state, who does not actually participate in the politics of the North, or allow party members in the North to do so.

Being absent from the North, with only the pretence of a presence within it, Fianna Fail can do nothing towards resolving the Union Jack crisis, or any other crisis. It can only preach from the outside. And preaching from the outside during the past forty years has been either a complete irrelevance or an irritant.

The 1937 Irish Constitution, drafted by Fianna Fail, asserted a right of sovereignty over the Six Counties. But it never did anything towards realising that right. It lacked a credible Army as a result of the Treaty War forced on it by Britain in 1922 but it had the option of working within the North as a party and showing how things should be done. It chose not to do so.

In 1998 it withdrew the sovereignty claim and recognised the Six Counties as being legitimately part of the British state, but it still refused to participate in actual political activity in the North, though extending individual party membership as a kind of pious consolation to Northern residents.

In the Summer of 1970, with the prosecution of John Kelly in the Arms Trial for things he had done in conjunction with the Fianna Fail Government in 1969-70, it began a practice of condemning what was going on in the North. It has kept up that practice ever since, with a couple of interludes. It preaches but it doesn't act.

The nursery rhyme comes to mind:

A hundred people in the world can say what should be done,
But when it comes to doing it you'll find no more than one.

With Fianna Fail still claiming to be Republican, a new Sinn Fein movement arose out of the chaos in the North, brought a degree of order to it, extended its electoral activity to the South, and is currently running neck and neck with Fianna Fail. This is naturally disconcerting for Mr. Martin. He has no means of political action in the North. He finds it impossible to adapt to the post-1998 situation in which Sinn Fein is a respectable party of power. He is at his wit's end in finding ways of disputing with it in the South short of condemning it as a bunch of murderers and robbers. And he has adopted a line of rhetoric with regard to Sinn Fein in the North that, if effective, would undermine the 1998 settlement.

He has toned down the rhetoric a bit since we last reported on it. In his *Irish News* article he merely condemns it for organising a protest movement over a member who was being held in custody on bizarre charges and being refused bail:

"What moral authority does any public representative have criticising a protest that challenges the writ and authority of the PSNI when their party was promoting just such a protest only months ago!"

In other words, because the Sinn Fein party organised an orderly protest about the extra-legal detention of one of its members, it has no right in Government to condemn

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UK Kicking The EU Can Down The Road

Britain's continuing membership of the EU, after 40 years, remains a defining issue in British politics. This speaks volumes. There is not such an issue in Ireland or in other Member States and that also speaks volumes. Britain clearly has an endemic existential problem with Europe, one that may be approaching a resolution.

For Britain, problems in Europe are to be exploited, for Europeans they are there to be solved.

This is the context for Cameron's much hyped speech of 23rd January. No doubt Obama's intervention was quite a shock: the President gave a clear warning that Britain's status in US eyes would plummet if there was a serious move to withdraw from the EU. Out of the EU's favour is one thing but out of US's favour is quite another. That is the road to the political wilderness for Britain.

But, despite this warning, Cameron has ensured that the existential problem of the EU will probably last for well over four more years, at least in UK politics. If he was serious about resolving his differences with Europe, he could begin his renegotiations right away and have the issue decided at the next Election or before. The basic content of what he is demanding will not change. If there was an issue of the UK joining the Euro that would be a major factor but that is now ruled out forever. All other issues on their own are minor by comparison and the real issue is and remains the elemental political one of whether the UK wants a positive or negative relationship with the EU.

Cameron wants it every which way. It is now for the EU leaders to make up their minds about this '*in, out, shake it all about*' approach by the UK. Their attitude is what will determine the outcome. Are they up to it or not is the only question.

Recently, there was a much more
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Labour Comment, edited by **Pat Maloney**:

The Dublin Guilds (II)

Mondragon, Part 16

(back page)

Trade Union Notes

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disorderly protests by Loyalists about a decision of the Belfast City Council about flying the Union Jack, which the Council was within its rights in making.

It seems that Mr. Martin does not yet know what Northern Ireland is. That is not really surprising in a resident of Cork City, whose History Professor has been churning out books saying that it is a State. It isn't a State. It is a form of local government set up by the Parliament of the state at Westminster. All its power is delegated from Westminster. Westminster remains the sovereign body and it continues to run many things directly, outside the remit of the devolved Government. The police practice of arresting people and holding them for extended periods prior to the Court Case was engaged in by the State authority, not by its local authority in the Six Counties. It was therefore entirely in order for a party in the devolved government, but not in the Government of the state, to protest against this action by the State.

It might be added that the demonstration represented more than a protest against

the imprisonment of a prominent Sinn Feiner: it was a message to London over they way its current policies towards republicans are destabilising the peace process.

Micheal Martin criticises Sinn Fein for not doing more to improve the position of deprived communities in the North, suggesting that this was a contributory factor to the flags issue. In this he was repeating criticism made last Autumn, before the Flag disorder. Again, he shows his ignorance of Northern structures Welfare is a 'reserved' service. Benefits of various kinds are administered by Westminster. It decides who should get them and what the rates are to be.

That said, it should be noted that Westminster—having decided to change the structures of Invalidity Benefit, to reduce its take-up—forced the Stormont Assembly to ratify the new rules. Sinn Fein tried to delay the vote, for further negotiations to take place with the British Government, but was in the end forced to

ratify along with the other Assembly Parties. The alternative was to jeopardise the welfare payments system.

However the Flag Riots may well have the effect of mitigating British welfare cuts in the North. One of the complaints of the rioters has been that the Peace Process has brought no material improvement in their lives; that deprived areas have not benefited. The Stormont administration, in conjunction with Westminster, is thus seeking to access EU funds to put into these areas. And there is anecdotal evidence which suggests that the new Invalidity Benefit rules are not being as stringently applied as in England.

In making these criticisms of Sinn Fein, Martin only shows his own ignorance. No wonder the *Irish News* tucked his article on the bottom half of page nine!

About the Union Jack issue Mr. Martin says that "*if the north's dominant political blocks continue to walk the path they have been for at least the past year, this dispute will go on*". He finds it obscene and disgusting but, as the hurler on the ditch, he makes no actual proposal for dealing with it.

The meaning of "*dominant political blocks*" is not clear. There are two blocks and they are in conflict. That is what politics has always been about in Belfast. The political structures arranged by the State allow for nothing else. But they cannot both be dominant. The struggle between them for dominance is what political life there has always been about.

Martin cannot mean "*the political forces that are dominant within each community*" because there is general agreement within each community. The SDLP does not support permanent Union Jackery over the City Hall.

The gist of the article seems to be this:

"There are many within the nationalist community who will characterise what's been happening as a unionist problem—to reflect as a brief feeling of moral superiority over political opponents making a spectacle of themselves in the international media. But that would be a mistake. It would be a mistake because anyone with any interest in moving forward its politics in a spirit of equality will look at what has been happening and know that a genuine republican project means nothing if it cannot demonstrate to all communities that indigenous democracy delivers. It would also be a mistake because the thugs who have the front pages of the newspapers do not have a monopoly on disregard for the rule of law. As recently as September we watched the Sinn Fein justice spokesperson in a picket of PSNI headquarters..."

—and so on, about the protest about the imprisonment of an innocent person on spurious charges,

What leaps out at one from this passage are the terms "*indigenous democracy*" and "*equality*". The term "*indigenous democracy*" has an ethnic flavour to it. It must, at any rate, mean something other than the democracy of the state. Applying it impressionistically to the situation, one could conclude that the problem is that there are now two *indigenous democracies* in the North, and that they are equal.

The democracy of the state, which has been denied to the North since Partition, might be capable of demonstrating something to "*all communities*". The indigenous forces cannot, and applying the word democracy to them changes nothing.

The conflict of communities is ineradicable in the framework of the political seclusion of the North.

The Unionist community has bound itself into that seclusion. It calls itself British but it has no presence in actual British political life, which, as a consequence, sees it as weird and alien. The nationalist community, since it turned to Sinn Féin, has been reaching out beyond the Northern Ireland hothouse with such success that it is now breathing down Mr. Martin's neck. It has also been making a serious attempt to reach out into the Protestant community—a thing which the SDLP never did in its quarter century of electoral dominance.

A generation ago Unionist Ulster refused to demand access to the political democracy of the state of which Unionists claim to be an integral part. They preferred communal conflict in the region in which they were a majority to incorporation into the political democracy of the state. They were secure that way because they were the majority. Their majority status was abrogated in large part by the arrangements of the 1998 Agreement. And now, suddenly, they are no longer a majority. They remain the biggest community in the communal structure of things, but not by much, and the future prospect is of further decline. So they riot, demanding the consolation of having the Union Jack flying day in, day out over the City Hall of the City in which they have lost the majority.

A contributory factor to their despair is the activity of the Historical Inquiries Team of the police. The 1998 Agreement should have consigned action done in the 'Troubles' to legal oblivion. Westminster used to do such things, but is no longer

Ratlines

The thriller novel *Ratlines* by author Stuart Neville of Armagh is reviewed by Siobhan Murphy in *Metro*, the free newspaper found in the stations of London's Underground. It is based, according to this reviewer, on the Republic's past, which she says has more dark secrets than kiddy-fiddler priests. She instances the 200 plus Nazis collaborators allowed to use Ireland as a refuge and staging post after WW2. Taoiseach Haughey is depicted as a grasping, reprehensible scumbag, according to this reviewer and in league with the Nazi refugees as a young man.

It is much of the same that I have heard in 1950s London when anti-Irishism was at its height, with tales of Nazis hiding in the Republic. Books and films like *The Cruel Sea* castigated Ireland for her neutrality. I take a risk and go by the author's name to say this sounds like Ulster Loyalist hatred, but of a kind that has mainly died out a few of years ago. As for war criminals, the UK has plenty of her own from Colonial days. They don't need to hide in another country but can blatantly enjoy their retirement in some of the best London and Home County homes—which they probably bought with loot from the colonies plus a generous Government payout for services rendered. Compare that with the three Kenyan victims who have been to London seeking compensation for being brutalised at the hands of the British administration in the Kenya of the 1950s. One of the victims was castrated in the notorious Hola Camp.

The reviewer Siobhan Murphy highly recommends this read. For more information you can find *Metro* online.

Wilson John Haire

It's All In The Genes!

Pat Walsh is on the ball in his comments in January's *Irish Political Review* on the UK 2011 Census results for Northern Ireland revealing that "people raised in a Protestant tradition form 48% of the population while those raised in a Catholic tradition form 45%.

A genetic map of the island of Ireland reveals that the population is solidly Celtic.

Over the centuries, England and her agents in Ireland have made strenuous efforts to exterminate, penalise, starve and discriminate against the native Celtic Irish and to settle English immigrants in their place. Yet English genes do not appear on the genetic map of Ireland.

Following the so-called Glorious Revolution in England in 1689, discrimination against the native Irish took place in religious form.

Native Irish were styled Catholics and penalised. English immigrants and their descendants were styled Protestants and were either not penalised if they were Anglicans or slightly penalised if they were dissenters.

Some materialistic native Irish people changed from Catholic to Protestant over the centuries. This not only saved them from being penalised, starved or discriminated against but also made them acceptable marriage partners for Protestants.

When a native Irish Protestant convert married a Protestant of English origin, the Celtic genes prevailed over the English genes. Their children became genetically Celtic though raised in the Protestant tradition.

The upshot is that the people of the island of Ireland are solidly Celtic or, in other words, Irish.

The descendants of Protestant converts did have a problem if they had native Irish names. This problem was often solved by dropping the O or the Mc or by altering the spelling.

Nevertheless, the Protestants of Northern Ireland are as Irish as the Catholics of the province or of the rest of Ireland.

Ivor Kenna

capable of them. Actions done in a situation in which there was no Constitutional order, and law was capriciously enforced, had to be raked over in the name of justice. Unionists, as the upholders of law and order, demanded it. But at the moment it is chiefly Unionists who have

suffered from this. During the War, authority often turned a blind eye—and often directed—Loyalist activity. Republicans had been subjected to the blunt end of the law during the War. Because of that, and because the new situation required some appearance of impartiality, Loyalists

have been suffering. And a Loyalist supergrass, Gary Haggerty, is wreaking havoc amongst them. The paramilitaries therefore have particular reason to be angry.

Unionist discontent is now beginning to express itself in a "civil rights movement", in a parody of the nationalist civil rights movement of the 1960s which undermined the Unionist Government.

If the One Man, One Vote demand had been conceded, little would have changed. When it was conceded, the change was hardly noticed. But the Unionists would not concede the change because the demand was being made by what was viewed as a front organisation of the IRA for anti-Unionist purposes and it was therefore not authentic. But it was the refusal to concede that slight reform that built up the pressure that caused Unionism to go berserk in August 1969.

There are two Unionist civil rights groups today: Willie Frazer's Ulster People's Forum and the DUP's Unionist Forum. They have no clear, realisable demand, like the CRA had. Nor have they a stupid, incompetent opponent, like the CRA had. And what is upsetting them is that everything, of which they once were master, is somehow slipping away from them.

Mike Nesbitt, leader of the rump of the once all-powerful Unionist Party, complains that there is an "erosion of Britishness". So there is. But who, other than the Unionist Party itself, is responsible for it? This is the same Unionist Party that has spurned the courting of Cameron's Conservatives. In 1921 it accepted semi-detachment from Britain as a "supreme sacrifice" which helped Whitehall to split Sinn Fein and string along Michael Collins with false promises which he should have known were false.

The Northern community that said it was British should have been enabled by Partition to participate freely in British politics. But Partition was used instead, by Whitehall, to separate it off from British politics, leaving it in a position where it could only say it was British, and seize on some inessentials of Britishness to assure itself that it was.

The Britishers were excluded from the reality of Britain and were locked into a communal conflict with the Nationalist community. Ruth Dudley Edwards, who began as a hierarchical nationalist intellectual, and later became a fervent admirer of Orange Unionism, was asked on BBC Radio 4 (9 Jan) what the problem was. She said it was "the political vacuum". By this she seemed to mean that the Protestants

were leaderless because they were Protestant, while the Catholics weren't leaderless because they weren't:

Ruth Dudley Edwards: "They have an advantage, a huge cultural advantage. The Catholic community is hierarchical. That's Catholicism."

Interviewer: "Interesting point."

RDE: "It is hierarchical, Catholicism is; Protestantism much less so; and in the case of Presbyterianism almost the opposite. Six Presbyterians in a room, ten opinions."

It has taken Ruth a long time to see what this journal has been saying for decades—that democracy in religious organisation does not tend to produce democratic political ability, and that Ulster Presbyterianism produced an apolitical, almost anti-political, mentality. Which is why Whitehall was able to use it as a pawn in its scheming against nationalist Ireland, and put it half out of the Union in the name of Unionism.

What does Ruth think can be done about it now: "Northern Ireland is in the UK for the foreseeable future. They've won. They've got to be told that."

They're so unpolitical that they don't even know that they've won! Are they really as stupid as that? Or is it that Ruth is groping beyond the reach of her own understanding?

They don't feel that they've won, and the feeling is soundly based. They were pushed out of the political life of the Union 90 years ago, but were cock of the walk at home. They're no longer cock of the walk at home.

The hope is now expressed in some Unionist circles that the Catholics will become Unionists and save the Union for them. Have they forgotten how it all began with their violent rejection of a Westminster policy of securing the Union by basing it on the majority Catholic population, which was willing to undertake that role in 1912?

And is it really any different now? The Union Jack riots hardly encourage Catholics to become Unionists. They are an expression of disgust at the fact that, within Home Rule Northern Ireland, Unionism has been reduced to formal equality with nationalism in many respects, with more in prospect.

Ruth Patterson, DUP Councillor in Belfast, had an article in the nationalist *Irish News* (12 Jan) in which she listed the steps downhill to equality since 1969, beginning with the disbanding of the B Specials. She asks:

"how much more are the Protestant

unionist people expected to take? A once proud, dignified and unstintingly loyal culture and identity lies stripped bare for all to see."

Well, Ulster Unionism chose the wrong road when it allowed itself to be led into a Six County Home Rule corral in 1921 in order to help Whitehall against Sinn Fein. Unstinting loyalty is not a political virtue. And if you take the wrong road it leads you to the wrong place.

Review: *Watching For Daybreak*, a history of St Matthew's Parish, Belfast by **Patricia Kernaghan**. Price £5

(postage not included) from St Matthew's Parochial House, Bryson Street, Belfast BT5 4ES.

Catholics In East Belfast

In 1921, a Diocesan Archivist, Father John Hassan, a priest of St. Mary's in Chapel Lane wrote:

"...Who shall ever write the history of the isolated Catholic group in Ballymacarrett [East Belfast], surrounded by coarse savage enemies in numbers ten to one, well-armed, confident and often supported by the forces of the law: For a year and a half already that devoted Catholic area has been living day and night under an almost unbroken siege. The inhabitants are in peril both indoors and out of doors. Their streets are constantly raked... with gunfire from the mob and from the Special Police. They have seen their church stoned and peppered with rifle fire... attempts to burn their convent."

Patricia Kernaghan has written a history of this Catholic enclave in East Belfast known as Short Strand. It is a story of horror upon horror. I wonder if Father Hassan ever thought there could be an end to it all one day? It is doubtful, for most Northern Catholics felt it in their bones that a major conflagration would one day take place. You might think the Catholics had acquiesced during a time when Lord Brookeborough, the then Stormont Prime Minister, was able to go on a world-wide cruise lasting many months. But defence work had to go on in many Catholic communities and the youth as always were continually asking the adults what they were going to do about it. But these children, unaware, were preparing for that day with war games involving guerrilla warfare tactics. I remember being shown, as a boy, by other boys, how to make a roofed dugout in a flat field that could not be seen until you stumbled upon it. In reading the novels of William Carleton, the early 19th

Century writer, I found the description of one that was used as a hedge school. We played and we dug, unaware of why we were doing it as if it were genetic.

Though Father Hassan was not to foresee the thirty-year-plus War which ended on the 20th July 1997. (The Divis Street riots of September 1964 is thought to be the beginning, when Catholics went from defence to the offensive.) Certainly he couldn't visualise websites like "*Loyalists Against Democracy*" [LAD] and "*Loyalists Against Short Strand*", both originating in East Belfast, which in a bellicose manner demanded that the flag on City Hall be flown 24/7/365 after Belfast City Council decided to bring the flying of the Union Jack in line with how it was flown in the UK and fly it on eighteen occasions a year, three occasions more than when it was flown under the 1950s Unionist-controlled Stormont.

But in the end it was all about Catholic Short Strand as far as Protestant East Belfast was concerned: that enclave once more came under attack from stones, petrol bombs and the odd gunshot. Considering its history the world press began to take an interest. The UVF, through, the LAD website and Twitter, wisely called off the attacks and demonstrations when the flag protest was seen by all and sundry as a cover for yet more sectarianism of the vilest kind.

The first St. Matthew's Catholic Church was opened and dedicated on the 13th March 1831. The *Northern Whig*, a Unionist paper, reported under the headline:

"Consecration of Ballymacarrett Chapel. Yesterday this new and much-wanted public place of worship..."

Though welcoming its consecration, there was then, as now, the habit of downgrading Catholic Churches to something as small as a Chapel while calling Protestant tin huts Churches.

Later a larger Church was required due to the influx of Catholic navvies coming from all over the country to dig the dry-docks for shipbuilders Harland & Wolff and the Workman Clark yard. It was a Protestant, Dr. Francis Ritchie, a friend of Father Killen, who managed to obtain two acres of land and who gave it as a gift for that purpose, in what was to become Short Strand. That Church was consecrated on the 24th June, 1883.

There had been minor sectarian clashes

from when the first Church was built but it wasn't until 1857, when Catholics were a significant minority, that serious anti-Catholic riots broke out after speeches by the Paisley of that day. Protestant workers began expelling Catholic workers from the shipyards, from engineering works, and from mills, when the Home Rule Bill was being discussed in Westminster. The RIC were attacked for being "*fenian police*" and, on one occasion, seven Protestants were shot down by them when they attacked a Police Barracks. The RIC continued in being until mid-1924 with many of them from the Southern Counties were posted to East Belfast.

My father (born 1900) often said that the Belfast of 1920-1921 was more dangerous than the Belfast of the 1970s and 1980s during the Thirty-Year-War. I found this hard to credit what, with massive car bombs and the use of battlefield weapons by the IRA. On reading this book, I began to understand what he meant. The period 1921-1922 was full of freelance gunmen, especially on the Protestant side. There was lots of impulsive shooting like when, on one occasion, a Protestant gunman fired on a group of Catholic children, killing a three-year-old. Pregnant women were also on the kill-list in East Belfast. The IRA retaliated after these killings but against male adults.

St Matthew's Church was attacked continually. A woman in the grounds was shot. As a priest gave the last rites to the dying woman, a bullet hit her in the leg. The priest had a narrow escape with bullets whizzing over his head.

Generally St Matthew's and the people of Short Strand have from 1920 onwards seen the IRA as their protectors. There is no apology in this honest book about that.

It acknowledges that some of the Short Strand residents joined the International Brigade on the Republican side during the Spanish Civil War. Three names are mentioned—Jim Straney, Willie O'Hanlon and Liam Tumilson. They were members of the IRA. Only O'Hanlon survived.

Two of our own are mentioned. One Sean McGuigan has written about the Church's windows. Peter Brooke's work has been researched by the author and is named in the Bibliography. This book also has an excellent Index. 170 pages with photographs.

Wilson John Haire
22nd January, 2013

EU

continued

important speech than Cameron's. It deserves looking at, as it states the facts squarely. It was given by Tony Blair. Blair is leading the argument to stay in the EU. His speech shows the strengths and weaknesses of what the issue is all about for Britain. Being free of Government responsibility at the moment, he can speak more plainly and honestly than Cameron, and that makes for a better understanding of what the problem is with the UK and Europe.

He gave a talk at Chatham House recently that involved blunt speaking on the issue:

"First, take a big step back from crisis and ask: what is the long-term rationale for Europe today? If there isn't one, of course, then why would we want to be part of it? However, the truth is the rationale for Europe today is stronger not weaker than it was back 66 years ago when the project began. But it is different. Then the rationale was peace. Today it is power" (*Europe, Britain and Business—Beyond the Crisis*, Chatham House, 28 November 2012).

And he elaborated further:

"The case for the EU today therefore is one that can be made for all European nations including Britain. It is that, in this new world, to leverage power, you need the heft of the EU. This is true in economics, in trade, in defense, foreign policy and global challenges such as climate change. It gives us a weight collectively that on our own we lack. It is not complex. It really is that simple. I rather like the idealism of Europe's early founders. But actually this has nothing to do with idealism. It is brutal *real politik*."

And—

"Politics at the top international level is about power. Separate us out from the decision-making structure of Europe and we will immediately relegate ourselves in the league of nations. I believe our other alliances would not blossom but decline."

The world knows very well what Tony Blair and Britain does with their power in the world and what his brutal *real politik* actually means. *Brutal* is a most appropriate word. Just look at the record of the spreading wreckage across the Muslim world at present. Britain wants to be in the EU to do more of the same wherever possible.

The crucial thing about his argument is that it is the same argument that Harold Macmillan made over 60 years ago when

he first broached the subject of British entry. He just expressed it differently. Macmillan had been taught a lesson by the US and the USSR at Suez in '56 that Britain's Empire days were numbered, despite all its brutal attempts to maintain it in Africa and elsewhere. After opposing and countering the original EEC by any and every means Macmillan and his chief Whip, Edward Heath, realised that they would not succeed in this and decided that it was better to join them when you can't beat them.

Macmillan dressed up the argument as Britain being to the EEC what Greece was to Rome. In other words, the real power had shifted to Europe and the only future was to try to lead and shape that new power in the world. It was to be a new vehicle for a new kind of Empire. It was not 'joining Europe' but utilizing it for Britain's ambitions. De Gaulle and others saw through this and would not have it. But Britain was desperate and kept trying and eventually got their way in a post de Gaulle Europe.

After a few years under Heath, Britain reverted to an overt hostility towards the Europe project and succeeded in diverting it from an internally-focused, integrating and independent path to an ever expanding, globalist, Free Trade entity that would slavishly follow an Anglo American orientation.

Luckily the Franco German axis launched the Euro as a response to German reunification and to keep the new Germany anchored in Europe. To develop properly as a currency it has to focus on internal integration. Few things are more important and internal to people than the security of the money in their pockets. It focuses the mind wonderfully.

Britain has never and will never be a part of this development, which is now the essence of the European project. This consolidation is succeeding and Britain is therefore desperate again and Blair personifies that desperation. In his view Britain has 'missed the boat' again.

As an Opinion piece in the *Irish Times* put it:

"The euro zone is gradually being sculpted into a functioning economic entity capable of supporting the world-ranking reserve currency the euro has now become. As the largest united bloc within the EU, the euro zone will inevitably become the union's decision-making core. Participation will increasingly have practical advantages to recommend it—not least of which will be a place for member states at the table, rather than on the menu: noticeably, hungry eyes have recently been cast from

within the euro zone in the direction of UK-based trade in euro-related securities" (*Irish Times*, 18 Jan.).

Blair sees this reality. Britain is throwing away the opportunities provided by this development for more power in Europe and the world. This horrifies him. But he knows Britain cannot really be part of the essential European project as it is not in the Eurozone and never will be. Hence the British dilemma about Europe. Hence the double talk and convoluted 'neither in nor out' position that Cameron keeps on about.

Blair desperately appeals to Britain not to throw away its ties with the EU, but what he is appealing for is essentially an *alliance* with Europe rather than *becoming part of it*. Britain wants to lead but without participating in what is now the real work of Europe project, the Eurozone integration.

'Alliance' is the most benign way to describe the proposed relationship—but it could more accurately be described as Britain being a Trojan horse, or a parasite on Europe's success. That is why Europeans are not likely to be so dumb as to see it as anything but destructive for Europe to have this semi-detached member acting as a leading member, given that this State can only have ulterior motives from a European integrationist perspective.

Britain is not in the boiler house with them building the Euro but waiting outside to utilize the boiler when it's working. If Europeans today have not learned any lessons about Britain at this stage they never will.

But European leaders may never summon up the will and the courage to show Britain the door—as the original

creators of the European project did. Therefore the most likely outcome is that Britain will remain a nuisance member of the EU, one that will debase it into a trading area of less and less political importance and which will wither on the vine. Fortunately that will not now matter so much as the Euro develops which will necessitate more and real integration, whatever happens to the EU as an institution. It may be a case of '*the EU is dead, long live Europe*'.

It is also worth noting that Blair's commitment to Europe has nothing whatever to do with the virtues of the European social market. He agrees with the Eurosceptics that all that is for the birds. He says:

"Changes to the labour market, pensions, welfare and the way the State operates are necessary in all Western countries for reasons of demography, technology and external competition. The European social model has to change radically for Europe to prosper. Many of these arguments over the years have lain most comfortably in the mouths of Eurosceptics. They were never the only ones to make them by the way. My speeches on Europe as Prime Minister were littered with references to the pro-Europe, pro-reform case. But the truth is: much of the criticism levelled at Europe has been justified and is shown to be justified now."

So that's the case for Britain remaining in the EU: more power for it to do what it has always done in the world but can no longer do alone, and to promote a dismantling of the more equitable social system that is the Europe social model.

Brexit? Speed the day!

Jack Lane

Britain and the European Union

The following letter appeared in the *Irish Times* of 11th January:

"Raymond Aron wrote in *Le Figaro* of December, 22nd-23rd, 1962: "*Great Britain has been the victim of its victory in 1945, as France between the wars was the victim of its victory of 1918, for the two victories had one trait in common: they were military and not political, illusory and not authentic*".

In his *Memoirs* of 1983 (English translation 1990), Aron expands on these remarks:

"Continental Europeans, all defeated, torn from their habits and traditions, set out for a new future. Great Britain did not see the necessity for renewal: first came the alliance with the United States, then the preservation of the Commonwealth, and only thirdly co-operation with the

Europeans. Churchill and the Conservatives argued in favour of Franco-German reconciliation, but all the leaders, Labour or Tory, were offended by the actual functioning of the Treaty of Rome. They had not taken the plans for European unification seriously. When they understood their mistake, they launched the idea of a free-trade zone, an initiative obviously to paralyse the formation of the Common Market. After the rejection of the free-trade zone came the candidacy that we could interpret less as a conversion to the community than as a subtle method to destroy it, or at least to reshape it according to their conceptions and their interests."

Plus ça change?"

John Evans

Shorts

from
the Long Fellow

EXCHEQUER FIGURES

The Exchequer figures for 2012 were good, although not as good as they first appeared. In 2012 the deficit was 14.9 billion euros which was a drop of 10 billion from the 2011 figure of 24.9 billion. However, the reason for the dramatic improvement was that there were once off banking adjustments, which were incurred in 2011 that were not repeated in 2012. If the bank adjustments are taken out of the figures the improvement is less dramatic: a reduction from 15.3 billion to 13.9 billion.

On a like-for-like basis, the total tax take was up 5.3%. Income Tax was up by 7.8% and Corporation Tax was up by 5.1%. VAT was up by 4.4%. The increase in tax revenue is encouraging as it shows that the economy has stabilised.

Expenditure (current and capital) was down 1.7%.

However, the primary balance (i.e. excluding interest and bank adjustments) is still in deficit: 8.2 billion in 2012 compared to 10.7 billion in 2011. So the accumulated National Debt to GDP ratio continues to rise but at a decelerating rate.

We haven't yet achieved a primary balance of zero. But even then the nominal GDP rate would have to exceed the interest rate before there is a decline in the debt to GDP ratio.

REVENUE

It is interesting to look at the Revenue and Expenditure figures for the State from the peak of the boom in 2007 to the year just ended.

In 2007 tax revenue was at just over 47 billion euro. By 2010 it had dropped to 32 billion. Lenihan reversed the trend in his 2011 budget. And so, by 2012 tax revenue had increased to just under 37 billion—still about 10.5 billion short of the 2007 peak level.

Where exactly did the shortfall in tax revenue occur between 2007 and 2012? Here is the breakdown:

Value Added Tax—4.3 billion
Capital Gains—2.7 billion
Corporation Tax—2.2 billion
Stamp Duty—1.8 billion
Excise Duty—1.1 billion

The only significant tax category that showed an increase was Income Tax. This was up by 1.6 billion which represents an

increase of almost 12% at a time when the economy was contracting and there were less people employed.

In 2007 VAT brought in more revenue than any other tax category. It represented 30.7% of the total tax take. Income Tax consisted of 28.7% of the tax take. By 2012 the proportions had changed. Income tax now represents 41.4% of the tax take, while VAT—despite the increase in the standard rate from 21% to 23%—now accounts for only 27.8%.

EXPENDITURE

If we look at the trend in State expenditure since 2007 the overall figure has not changed. There has been a marginal decrease: from 56.4 billion to 55.9 billion euro. But the 'running to stand still' has been a painful process. Not surprisingly, Department of Social Protection spending increased by 5 billion over the period (almost 60%). Most of the other spending categories experienced a decline, which just about offset the increased spending as a result of the rise in unemployment.

Michael Noonan thinks that our current budget deficit for 2012 will dip below 8%. This is better than the target of 8.3%. It would be premature to say that we have 'turned the corner': we still need a fair wind from the world economy. But there is at least the prospect of the debt levels being put on a sustainable footing.

ARGENTINA

At the beginning of the crisis there were calls for defaulting on the debt. David McWilliams claimed that creditors have no memory and would be happy to lend to this country within a short period of a default. That has not been the experience of Argentina. After her default of 2002 she remains excluded from international capital markets. Also, she has not extricated herself from the old debt. Her attempts to make a deal with some creditors to roll-over debt at 30% of its value have been stymied by a US Court ruling in favour of creditors who are seeking payment of 100% of the debt. All repayments must be paid to this group of creditors first.

EURO ZONE CRISIS

Is the crisis in the Euro in the process of being resolved? The economist Nicholas Veron on the [www.voxeu](http://www.voxeu.org) website believes the answer is yes.

The passing of the Fiscal Compact was followed by an agreement last December by Finance Ministers for a Single Supervisory Mechanism over Euro area banks. The European Central Bank will be at the heart of this supervisory mechanism

which will apply to banks with assets of over 30 billion (for example Anglo Irish Bank had over 70 billion euro of assets in 2008) and some other smaller banks. It is estimated that this will cover more than 75% of Euro area banking assets.

Veron would have favoured all banks to fall under the supervisory mechanism, but the German economy is dominated by local banks, which did not wish to be subject to the new regulatory regime.

A general feature of the current crisis is that new institutional mechanisms are being devised to defend the Euro. These are overriding the existing institutions (e.g. the European Banking Authority) of the European Union. The Euro-zone countries have had to concede to the UK restrictions on the reform of the European Banking Authority. There must be a majority among countries subject to the Single Supervisory Mechanism (mainly Euro countries) along with a separate majority in other countries in the EU for a reform to be implemented.

The new regulatory framework will help prevent a repeat of the current crisis, but no regulatory framework is perfect. What happens if banks fail in the future or indeed how are existing fragile banks to be dealt with? The most challenging reforms will involve Banking Resolution schemes and Deposit Insurance. These reforms are a prerequisite for banking union and have yet to be tackled.

THE UK REFERENDUM

David Cameron made what was billed to be a groundbreaking speech in Amsterdam on January 18th, but it was postponed, allegedly because of the hostage crisis in Algeria. The previous day Mark Reckless, a Euro-sceptic Conservative Party MP, gave a preview on RTE Radio 1 of what he thought would be in the speech. His understanding was that Cameron was going to promise a referendum on membership of the EU in the lifetime of the next parliament.

The suspicion is that the UK intends to dangle the prospect of a British exit in order to halt progress towards greater political cooperation among Euro zone countries. Is it possible that Cameron had second thoughts and realised that his bluster has no credibility? The other countries are not going to risk a collapse of the Euro in order to placate the UK.

That was the message delivered by Enda Kenny in one of his first speeches of the Irish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Even the least Republican of Irish leaders realises that Irish interests lie with engagement with Germany rather than the UK. The UK has nothing to offer.

IRISH PROPERTY MARKET

A contrarian view on the Irish property market was expressed by James Nugent, the Management Director of Lisney Estate Agents, on RTE Radio 1's *Drivetime* (18.1.13). Lisney is a substantial player in the Irish property market. Nevertheless it is only one firm among many, so his views should be treated with caution.

Nugent claims that Lisney's records show that residential property prices increased by 8% in 2012. He does not claim that prices across the country have increased by this much, but does think that the Central Statistics Office statistics showing a decline in property prices are wrong. The CSO is not picking up cash sales in its statistics. These were an insignificant proportion of overall sales three years ago, but with the contraction of credit have become much more important. Nugent says that 45% of its residential sales were cash sales. Most of these buyers are prosperous Irish "ex pats" who see value in the Irish market and have decided to return home. It would appear that if there is any buoyancy in the residential property market it is at the upper end.

He also predicted that there would be a shake up of the buy-to-let market. In the UK such property owners with mortgage arrears were 24 times more likely to have their properties repossessed by the banks than their Irish counterparts. In 2013 the number of repossessions in this sector of the Irish market is set to increase dramatically.

James Stewart

former General Secretary, Communist Party of Ireland

The CPI website has just announced the death of James Stewart at the age of 78. Someone either deliberately or mistakenly puts him down as joining the CPI in 1955. The CPI didn't again come into being until 1970 when the CPNI and the Dublin-based Irish Workers' League became the CPI.

I can find nothing on the website that mentions the CPNI. In fact history of the communist movement stops at 1948 and those individual members who lived beyond that period are marked down as being members of the CPI without mentioning that they had also been members of the CPNI.

A suppression of CPNI history? Oddly enough, the history of the CPI, before the split in 1941 was suppressed by the CPNI because the old CPI had the national question on its agenda and they didn't want to upset the mainly Protestant membership. The CPNI was very influential in the Trade Unions, again, with an overwhelming Protestant membership. Some of the most savage criticism against those in the Young Workers' League who wanted to know more of the past history of Communism in Ireland, North and South, came from the full-time Trade Union leaders.

I first met James Stewart in 1950 when he was Secretary of the Young Workers' League—the youth section of the CPNI. He was also a member of the CPNI.

I remember he had a love of Scottish border ballads and would read them at meetings, which didn't go down well with the few Catholics members. They saw it as settler propaganda during this period of the old Stormont Unionist regime.

Awkward incidents in political life helps the memory of things past and I relate one or two of these incidents without vindictiveness. One such incident was over the ongoing argument about the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Cominform in 1948.

It was 1950 and the Cominform newspaper: *For a Lasting Peace and a People's Democracy* was still attacking Yugoslavia as a fascist country because of the arrest and imprisonment of its pro-Soviet CP members. Maybe I was naive but I began raising the question, outside YWL meetings, of why this once heroic nation was now deemed to be fascist. A *comrade*, who was also bothered by this turnaround, decided to implicate me when the YWL secretary James Stewart heard rumours.

In a personal conversation with him I decided to give into the official line to avoid being expelled. At that time Communism was opening up the whole world for me politically and culturally. I just had to be at the fountain head so I treated this matter as merely a local issue.

On another occasion the YWL held a mock election with the usual candidates for NI Labour, Nationalist, Unionist and CPNI. I stood as Unionist. Jimmy Stewart supplied me with various booklets which he had obtained from Unionist headquarters. I read up on them. On the night of the election I made my speech based on the booklets.

In winning by a landslide I began to wonder about the membership. Jimmy comes to me in a panic and tells me, orders me, not to let this be known outside the YWL. He also addressed the YWL in an emergency meeting vowing them to silence. I was amused as a Catholic.

I left Belfast for London in 1954 and the next contact I had with James Stewart was in 1973 when he wrote a diatribe against me in the CP paper *Unity*. I had a play running at the Belfast Lyric Theatre

Letter sent to *Irish Times*, 23.1.13

Cameron's Speech and Ireland

Cameron in his speech made the case for the Eurosceptics. He listed everything they saw as wrong with the EU and agreed with them. His impossibilist claims on what the EU would have to do to meet British demands would seem to make an "Brexite" the only option. Both the German and the French foreign ministers immediately rejected Cameron's demands.

The Eurosceptics have a strong case that Britain could thrive outside the EU as a global low-cost financially-driven economy. A commentator in the *Guardian* described this perspective as "*Greater Switzerland*". Switzerland, a country which, like Britain, depends largely on its banking services, is outside the EU but maintains advantageous trading relations with it. Britain in a similar role could comfortably co-exist with a Eurozone—that included Ireland—as it consolidated further.

The Tánaiste, Éamon Gilmore, has

argued that a British exit would be bad for Ireland ("EU 'better with Britain'—Gilmore", *Irish Times*, 23 January). But the issues of Northern Ireland and the "common travel area" do not require that Britain stay in the EU (both issues existed before either Ireland or the UK were EU members). The main case made is economic. We have refused to implement the Financial Transaction Tax because of our alleged closeness to the City of London.

But this is bad logic. Austria, although mainly an industrial and agricultural country, is an Eurozone state with a substantial traded financial sector which seems perfectly capable of thriving despite the actual Switzerland located right next door to it.

Ireland should continue its integration into the Eurozone and Britain should be facilitated in exiting if that is its wish.

Philip O'Connor

and it seems I was favouring the Protestant community. By this time the CPNI and the IWL were merged as the CPI and it was 'all change' from Protestant influences to Catholic influences south of the border, with the Northern Protestant membership down to a handful.

The CPNI and the YWL were in a way a refuge for political Catholics from the Special Branch. Protestant and Catholic were kept under their surveillance but it was done in an amiable fashion. They told us their names and their rank and reminded us that they would be needed even more under a Communist Government. But there was always going to be the odd nasty individual promising to torture us when the right day came along. They saw the YWL and the CPNI as under Protestant leadership and the few Catholics in it as ceased Catholics. The CP bookshop sold such *literature* as *The Catholic Church Against The Twentieth Century* by Avro Manhattan, the Jewish fantasist. Written in 1949, he saw the Vatican as a nest of Nazi collaborators. It was the Cold War and the clash between Catholicism and Communism, but for such an issue to crop up in the CPNI was insensitive. I think we all lived under an illusion that the CPNI could solve our differences but the reality was that, when the meetings were over, the Catholics tended to go off as a group taking along with them one Protestant who favoured bringing back the national question.

The wife of James Stewart, Edwina, was also a member of the YWL and the CPNI.

Her parents, Sadie and Eddie Menzies, were active members all their lives. They, with a few other Protestant members, did suffer hardship and some went to prison during the 1930s version of the CPI. So it is all a tragedy we couldn't see eye-to-eye with one another during those CPNI days.

Wilson John Haire
30th January 2013

Jimmy Stewart was born in Ballymena on the 23rd of November 1934 to Florry and Bob Stewart, and went to school at the Ballymena Academy. From there he went to Stranmillis Teacher Training College where he met Edwina Menzies—daughter of Eddie and Sadie. Jimmy and Edwina were married in 1954. In 1955 Jimmy joined the Communist Party of Ireland—Edwina was already in the CP, her parents were founder members.

He began his teaching career in Hemsworth Square school and later in Somerdale school on the Shankill Road, where he taught history and art. He later became a full time worker for the Communist Party of Ireland until his retirement.

Marketing Genocide

When Burma suffered a natural disaster a few years ago the United States sent along a warship and made a pressing offer of assistance. The Burmese Government refused the offer, as the US was engaged in an attempt to subvert it and it was a reasonable assumption that charitable assistance would be accompanied by subversion. In the British House of Commons a Member described the Burmese refusal of American aid as *genocidal*. Nobody expressed disagreement. And the charge was repeated in Ireland by Michael D. Higgins (not President at the time).

In the event, the Burmese State dealt with the disaster competently, with assistance from States that were not trying to overthrow it. I did not hear any withdrawal of the charge of genocide. The important thing morally was apparently that American assistance would have facilitated democratic subversion of the Burmese State, while assistance from neighbouring Asian States did not.

It is clearly not the case that the fact of genocide is something that is capable of being determined by the application of objective measurement to an event. Determining what is genocide has long since become a subjective matter—a construct of the foreign policy of States, or a jibe thrown about in political disputes.

An American book on the Irish Famine Holocaust, which comes with recommendations by both the Clintons, John Kelly's *The Greaves Are Walking*, tells us at the start that:

"The old Irish nationalist charge that London pursued a deliberate policy of genocide in Ireland has been discredited; modern research has also tempered another old charge. With the exception of one critical period in late 1846 and early 1847, famine Ireland imported more food than she exported. What turned a natural disaster into a human disaster was the determination of senior British officials to use relief policy as an instrument of nation-building in one of the most impoverished and turbulent parts of the Empire... Whitehall and Westminster were eager to modernise the Irish agriculture, which was widely viewed as the principal source of Ireland's poverty and chronic violence... The result was a relief programme that... was more concerned with fostering change than with saving lives... John Mitchel... depicted the British officials who presided over the famine as genocidal gargoyles.

They were not. In the main they were wakeful-minded, God-fearing, and—by their own lights—well intentioned men, and that is what makes them so depressing" (p3-4).

The fact that "*Ireland*" (i.e., the British Government—Ireland had no say in it) imported more food into Ireland than it exported has little to do with the matter. The food in Ireland could not be bought by the Irish. Only the Government could have bought it. And, if it had been known that the Government was in the market for it, prices would have gone through the roof. It actually was economic (in both respects, i.e., cheapness and "nation-building) to export the food that was in the country and to buy other food in foreign parts.

The only alternative was that the Board of Works should confiscate the food produced in the country and use it for feeding the people, topping it up with imports. But that would be the end of "*nation-building*".

The initial (Tory) response to the potato blight provided a degree of relief that seems adequate by contrast with what was done in the following years. Then the Board of Works became a massive operation which had so much under its control that it might easily have gone on to expropriate the food that was in the possession of landlords and farmers. But that was not done. And Government policy underwent a radical change when Peel's Tories were replaced by Russell's progressive Liberal Government, that came into Office in 1846. Commandeering food could never have been contemplated under the *laissez faire* outlook: it would have destroyed the first shoots of market development. It would have been a crime against nature—a crime against humanity—in their eyes.

About twenty years ago I gave a talk about the Famine Holocaust in Newmarket, on the edge of Slieve Luacra. I tried to give an impression of the extent to which the market did not exist in most of Ireland in those days. A market is a vast, intricate network of retail shops, supplied by wholesalers, and set in motion by money which customers pay to the retailers. Where that network did not exist, the doling out of money would not have the immediate effect of eliciting food.

I must have conveyed a realistic impression of that state of affairs because it had a shocking effect on one young man. He did not actually say that the, if the way that the British State dealt with the potato blight had the effect of laying out a market infrastructure, then there was something to be said for the Famine, but I think he was thinking it.

Mere human life was of no value when the market system was being fully developed into *laissez-faire* capitalism. It was necessary to ride roughshod over mere humanity so that Capitalism might be created. Excessive concern for the victims would have aborted the process.

Waste human material, human material not engaged in the market, and for which no use can be found within the market, must be got rid of—lest it endanger the progress of the market. British rule—which did not begin with the Act of Union in 1800—had reduced Ireland to the condition where the bulk of its population was waste material.

There can be endless quibbling over whether the second British Government of 1846 implemented a genocidal policy in Ireland. But it is hardly disputable—except by outlandish apologetics—that the long-term tendency of English government in Ireland was genocidal. The matter was set out plainly by the genocidal poet, Spenser, who helped with the Elizabethan massacres, was given a large tract of territory in Cork as a reward, and has become one of the heroes of Irish revisionism. The fact that he was genocidal towards the Irish is taken to be irrelevant—quite rightly so, from the viewpoint of progress. Four centuries after Spenser, when England was at the peak of its liberal development, it was exuberantly genocidal. Gladstone's lieutenant, Sir Charles Dilke, boasted in his best-seller, *Greater Britain*, that the English were the top exterminators known to history, and for the top literary men of the time (Wells, Shaw etc.) the obligation of genocide was an unquestionable Imperial necessity.

If the long-term genocidal tendency of English rule had been implemented with full force for a generation, we would not now be discussing it. Literal genocides cause no pangs of conscience to the perpetrators. Historians record them as footnotes, if at all. It is the partial genocides—a contradiction in terms sanctioned by the UN—that make the news. And it is the peoples who have been exterminated who keep them in the news.

Applying the strict meaning of the word

to the policy of the 1846 Liberal Government, it becomes clear that it was not literally genocide. Its object was not complete extermination. It was culling. The Liberals saw the millions of waste human material in Ireland as something that might be made usable if it was cut down drastically.

The Tories made some effort to feed the starving during the first year of the potato failure. The Tories were the party that dragged their heels in the development of Capitalism. The vanguard party of Capitalism was the Liberals. The Liberals had been the dynamic party of English development for over a century, during the progress towards *laissez-faire* Capitalism. A great Liberal agitation for Free Trade—the greatest agitation there has ever been in England—was unleashed by the 1832 Reform, which admitted the middle class to political power. The Tories resisted, but the Tory leader, Peel, felt by the mid-1840s that they could resist no longer. In 1846 he used the Irish Famine as an excuse for establishing Free Trade by repealing the Corn Laws.

The second year of the Famine was worse than the first, but the Liberal Government dismantled the arrangements the Tories had made. The Liberal Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, said it was not the business of the Government to feed the people. He availed of the crisis to establish the framework of the market mechanism in Ireland. Some were fed in the process. Others starved. By the end of it, in the early 1850s, the market mechanism was laid out around the country. And the population was sufficiently culled to enable it to operate. From that point on, the national sentiment worked up by Daniel O'Connell's Monster Meetings, and shaped to a coherent middle class purpose by Young Ireland, combined with market economic development, to produce a nationalist movement which undermined British rule in the course of two generations.

A minimal figure loss relating to the Great Hunger was put into circulation by the authorities—a million starved and a million emigrated. A.J.P. Taylor, following Woodham Smith, said two million died. Jack Lane has shown that the 1841 Census under-counted the population while the 1851 Census over-counted, and applied a realistic rate of growth to a realistic estimate of the 1841 population, and has left little doubt that the deaths must have been considerably greater than two million.

It has been suggested that numbers

don't count—not beyond a million anyway. But we know from other instances that numbers are taken very seriously indeed. Any tampering with the conventional six million for the Jews in the Second World War is likely to be called Holocaust Denial, which has been made a criminal offence in many countries.

Historians and ideologists who are outraged by the suggestion that British policy in Ireland was genocidal—as if this was something out of character for Britain—do not quibble about deaths connected with the Russian industrialisation campaign being described as genocide. It is said that the intention of genocide is demonstrated by the slogan of "*liquidating the kulaks as a class*".

The situation was that the Bolshevik Party availed of the incompetence of the middle-class Government that was put in Office when the Tsarist Government collapsed under the stress of the Great War (which it had set in motion by the mobilisation of late July 1914) to take power and pre-empt capitalist development by means of socialist construction. The capitalist forces in Russian society were so weak that socialist construction went on for over a decade. By the late 1920s, however, there had been a development of capitalist farming while in the cities there had been socialist industrialisation. The rural capitalist forces were then sufficiently strong to dispute the future line of development with the socialist towns. When the State embarked on a massive industrialisation campaign in the early 1930s, it found that supplies from the agricultural sector were being withheld. It therefore set about reorganising agriculture by organising the poorer peasants into collectives and putting an end to capitalist farming—the kulaks were capitalist farmers.

For obvious reasons capitalist historians are inclined to maximise the deaths from the famine which that conflict caused, and to minimise the deaths in the Irish Famine. Both famines were the product of economic policy, the Irish of capitalist construction and the Russian of socialist construction.

John Kelly took part in an RTE discussion, along with Coogan and others, of Coogan's *The Famine Plot*. He denied point blank that British policy in Ireland was genocidal. He said the Russian (Ukrainian) Famine of the early 1930s was definitely the result of genocidal policy. It all depended on intention—or on documents expressing intention. Where were the British Government documents expressing genocidal intent (when

engaging in actions that were genocidal in effect)? Where indeed? echoed Mary Daly. Coogan couldn't deliver them.

But where were Kelly's documents showing the intention of the Russian Government to exterminate the Ukrainians, as distinct from reorganising agriculture to secure materials for socialist construction?

An English historian, David Irving, set out to write a history of the 2nd World War from documents. He could find no Hitler document ordering the extermination of the Jews. Nevertheless he held Hitler responsible for the extermination attempt because of the public atmosphere his regime had promoted. He also set about revising the figures and distinguishing between the different ways Jews were killed—such as wastage in internment conditions as against direct killing. He revised the figures downwards, but never, as far as I could discover, denied that millions had been killed deliberately. Yet an English Court found that he was a Holocaust Denier, and he was imprisoned in Austria as a Holocaust Denier.

Genocide was thereby removed from the sphere of historical investigation and made an Article of Faith enforceable by law. And of course in the end law is policy. And it is policy that there was Russian Genocide in the Ukraine and that there was not British Genocide in Ireland.

England, which had entire responsibility, long-term and short-term, for the condition of Ireland, might have fed the Irish. The marvellous administrative structures that it set up puts that beyond doubt. But feeding them would have stunted capitalist development in Ireland, and would have affronted the exuberant Free Trade ideology which had just won out in British culture.

I cannot see that it would have been more than a minor inconvenience for Britain to have fed the Irish in the condition to which it had reduced them. The starving Irish were not in any sense a public force actively hostile to the development to which Britain had committed itself. That was also the opinion of Isaac Butt, a High Tory and a Professor of Political Economy, and a Unionist. He could barely restrain himself from describing the Government policy as extermination. With the resources of a great part of the world at their disposal, British Ministers might have fed the Irish but let them starve. He took that fact as demonstrating that the Union was bogus and he became a Home Ruler.

It is not so clear that the Russian Government could have dealt so simply with the

problem with which it was faced. The kulaks were not an inert mass. And the Government did not have a vast Empire from which it might have fed the towns and got the raw material for industrialisation.

The British administrators of Ireland, who availed of the potato blight for "*nation building*", knew that they were agents of Providence. That is a heady thing to be. Nevertheless some of them had to steel themselves to the task set for them by Providence and not let lower feelings of the primitive human system divert them. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Charles Wood, wrote to a colleague: "*We shall need iron nerves to go through with it*".

When Churchill visited Stalin in Moscow in mid-August 1941 the Armies of industrialised Russia, made possible by Collectivisation, had begun the saving of the British Empire by maintaining an unbroken front against the German invasion:

"'Tell me', I asked, 'have the stresses of this war been as bad to you personally as carrying through policy of Collective Farms?'..."

"'Oh, no', he said, 'the Collective Farm policy was a terrible struggle... It was fearful. Four years it lasted. It was absolutely necessary for Russia if we were to avoid periodic famines'..." (Churchill, *The Hinge Of Fate*, Ch. 28).

Each Famine was an incident in a project of economic construction. Characterisation of the Famine depends on how the economic project is viewed. From a capitalist viewpoint, the Famine which happened in the context of socialist construction is genocide. Those who quibble about characterisation of the Irish Famine incidental to capitalist construction as genocide do not apply the same finicky standards to the Russian Famine—even though it is arguable that, if Soviet industrialisation had not been carried through rigorously, Nazism would have consolidated itself as the general order of things in Europe. That would have been a fate worse than death, according to the current fashion in academic history which depicts Irish Neutrality as a kind of crime against Humanity. But I'm sure that, if Russia had collapsed in 1941 as Britain and France—who had started the World War had collapsed in 1940—Britain would have made a settlement with Hitler. There are many signs of preparation to do just that. And of course it was Churchill more than any other leading politician of the post-1918 Versailles elite who had clearly and distinctly hailed Fascism as the force which saved Western civilisation from Bolshevism.

That, of course, is speculative. But, if speculation is ruled out on that possibility, it must also be ruled out on other possibilities and it must be accepted that the Famine through which the capitalist will in rural Russia was broken, and the comprehensive socialist industrialisation of the 1930s was made possible, helped to save Liberal Capitalism from defeat in the War which it declared on Fascist Capitalism.

It is hard to see what cosmic issue was at stake in Britain's decision to inflict Famine on the Irish when the potato failed. Britain just tidied up its backyard at the cost of millions of dead and millions emigrated. And it reduced the Irish population, which had been close to half of the English, to a small fraction of it.

Churchill had discussed the Russian Famine dispassionately with Stalin at a moment when the Bolshevism that had broken rural Capitalism in 1931 was saving Britain's bacon a little over a decade later. But, when Britain's bacon was saved, Churchill re-activated the campaign against Bolshevism as the most evil force in Europe's history. The Russian Famine then ceased to be an incident in the cause of Progress. It became Genocide again and ongoing resentment over it by the survivors was actively stirred up. Was that Russophobia? Realistic remembrance of the Irish Famine is often put down to Anglophobia—a phobia being a disease of the mind.

What is required of the victims of capitalist Progress is that they should see themselves in perspective and not carry on about it. What is required of the victims of an enemy is that they should retain an absolute, vivid memory of the worst that was done to them, brood on it, and prepare for vengeance.

At the time of the Irish Famine, colonisation was much discussed in Britain. And the Irish were of course a source of material for British colonisation. But this brings us back to Genocide. In an occupied world, Genocide is obviously a precondition of colonisation. Don Akenson, C.C. O'Brien's hagiographer, indicted the Irish of racism etc, because of their conduct in the colonies. But the Irish in the colonies were members of a society broken by Britain who were made use of in a British colonial project. While the Irish raw material used in British colonisation projects seem to have been more inclined to race mixing than the true-born English were, there is no doubt that they took on the attitudes fostered by the British State and British society.

It might be that, if O'Connell had got

Repeal of the Union (restoring legislative independence and the Kingdom of Ireland), or if Griffith had got his Dual Monarchy, there would have been Irish Colonies, and the Irish would have behaved as badly towards their natives as the English had behaved towards them. But it never happened. The Irish in the colonies were mere instruments of the British State.

John Kelly began his book by denying that Britain's policy on the potato blight was genocidal. He ends it by saying that "*The intent of those policies may not have been genocidal, but the effects were*" (p330). It's a fine distinction—and suitably theological for a regime of Evangelicals. Did God intend the consequences of his actions? He set up the arrangements. He saw what they led to—in fact, he saw it in advance. He had the power to alter the course of things, but he did not use it. But he was not responsible for what happened in the world he had made, though his attributes were Omniscience, Omnipotence, and Omnipresence. That is the great theological mystery of Free Will which nobody has yet got to the bottom of by the use of reason.

Ireland in the 1840s had not made itself. Its power of action as a society had been destroyed by the Williamite Conquest *circa* 1690 and by the destructive totalitarian regime based on it which operated throughout the 18th century into the 19th. In 1845 it was as England had chosen to make it. The British State, which had little in the way of a bureaucracy a century earlier, had a very competent bureaucracy by 1845, and an impressive capacity for administrative action. It knew what was happening in Ireland, and had the power to alter it. If one concludes that the effects of what it actually did were genocidal but exonerates the intentions of those responsible for those effects, that is possible only on the ground of belief, which is beyond reason. It might be felt that belief is preferable. If so, all that can be said is *Amen!*

Tim Pat Coogan's book on the Famine (reviewed last month in *Irish Political Review* by Jack Lane) was reviewed in the *Irish Times* (19 Jan) by Peter Gray, a British Professor at the Queen's University who is himself the author of a picture-book about the Famine. The headline of the review—which in the journalistic style adopted by the paper is the most important part of it—is: *Polemic Without Plausibility*.

It is a good thing not to be *plausible*, isn't it? Plausible is connected with 'applause'. It used to mean playing to the

gallery. It came to mean something different, but only slightly so: superficially persuasive but suspect of being deceptive. It must surely be a good thing not to be *plausible*. But Professor Gray thinks it is a bad thing.

As to "*polemic*": I have noticed that the word is now used as a term of disparagement in academic pseudo-science. But the literary works which went into the making of Britain's State were not academic. They were polemical pamphlets in which a wealth of information, that would stretch to a hundred PhDs, was concentrated and used up to make a political point. Clarendon, Halifax, Burnet, Defoe, Addison, Swift, Burke, etc: all polemicists. Even Locke. Anti-polemical, academic history sets in much later as a form of indoctrination supportive of the *status quo*. Considered as history, it is apologetics. The period of the construction of the State is over. It is in decline. The object is to blunt critical thought about it in order to eke out its existence.

Independent Ireland should have been where polemical history on the theme of the British State continued after apologetics had taken over in Britain. It was necessary to the development of an independent spirit in nationalist Ireland that this should be done. It was not done, and the consequences are obvious. And of course, British apologists have taken over Irish academia.

David Milliband, former British Foreign Secretary, while he was in the running to become Labour Party Leader, was interviewed about torture. As Foreign Secretary he had of course "*rendered*" people for torture, hadn't he? Never! Perish the thought! Britain doesn't engage in torture. He was pressed on the issue.. It was obvious that he had not quite mastered the art of dissimulation because he conceded that, while torture was entirely out of the question, "*cruel and unusual punishment*" was sometimes permissible. It is a distinction in words that it would not be easy to give meaning to. If you were subjected to cruel and unusual punishment you would certainly *feel* that you had been tortured.

When the British Government was taken to the European Court on a charge of torturing British subjects in Northern Ireland, it set its skilful forensic moralists to work, backed by the influence of the State, and they pleaded the charge down to *cruel and unusual punishment*. If a State with which Britain was in conflict did something comparable to its citizens, the British media would describe it as

torture and there would be no dissent—not audible dissent anyway.

It's all about words on the official record, not meaning. The United States has made things awkward for Britain with regard to torture by continuing to use words meaningfully and discussing the circumstances under which torture might be the right and necessary thing to do. And American academics are threatening to make things even more difficult by describing the exterminations on which the British colonies (which went on to become the USA) were built as Genocides.

Gray takes Coogan to task for holding Charles Trevelyan, a mere Treasury official, responsible for the "*famine plot*". That would clearly be absurd. Britain was a well-ordered State that no civil servant could hijack for the purpose of doing evil to Ireland. He suggests Coogan does this because probing the sources of Trevelyan's power

"might in part implicate the wider "British public" Coogan seeks to exclude from any responsibility...".

That is certainly a fundamental weakness in the world-view of Coogan and a great many others. They have a cockeyed view of "*Tories*" which often reverses the reality of things, and they have a schematic ideological view which detaches the people from the Government in a well-established system of representative government.

The head of the Poor Law in Ireland and the Chairman of Relief Commissioners (Edward Twistleton) resigned his Office because he saw that there was an extermination system in progress. He did not complain about Trevelyan to Parliament. He resigned because he saw that it was the House of Commons that was intent on extermination.

Wolfe Tone, a hard-headed politician, explained at some point in the 1790s that he was no visionary democrat. What he wanted for Ireland was a system of government that was as representative as the English system of the time. He considered the English system—honeycombed though it was with rotten boroughs—as sufficiently representative, and did not think that franchise reform would make much difference. The franchise was reformed in 1832, and it didn't. The Reform brought the Evangelical, utilitarian, incipiently Darwinist middle class to power in Parliament to preside, as an agency of Providence, over the culling of the Irish. (And, three generations later, it was the first fully democratic Parliament that put in the Black and Tans.)

Coogan was idealistically negligent in not tracing Trevelyan's power to its source. But tracing it to its source certainly does not weaken the case for Genocide.

John Mitchel laid the charge of Genocide in *The Last Conquest Of Ireland (Perhaps)* a century and a half ago;. Coogan defends it. Both books are "similarly suffused with anger", says Gray/ I got much of my understanding of the Famine decades ago from a long article published in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1848 which set out to describe it with the coolness of a future generation. I have written about it coolly in *The Economics Of Partition* and in *Spotlights On Irish History*. And, taking account of how the word "genocide" has been generally used in recent decades, I cannot see what is described by the *Edinburgh Review* (one of the great British liberal magazines) can be considered anything other than genocide incidental to the progress of Capitalism.

Coogan regrets that Mitchel went "out of fashion", says Gray, but he has seen Mitchel's view depicted on "a recent mural on Belfast's Springfield Road". Enough said! It can't be genocide if the Provos say it was. Or, if it was, we mustn't admit it because it encourages them. History must still be written in an attempt to take the ground from under the Provos—even though the Provos, strengthened rather than weakened by self-censorship applied with them in mind, have become the main force of order in the North and have brought into being a middle-class which is hegemonic because it was generated from a populace at war.

Gray asks how British Famine policy can have been genocidal if it was accompanied by charitable assistance from Britain for the starving Irish. Kelly asked the same question in his debate with Coogan on RTE radio. I would have thought that was par for the course. We see it every day, as capitalist globalisation destroys people and raises charity for them at the same time—the charity always being grossly insufficient to obstruct the progress of Capitalism. Peter Sutherland was, appropriately, head of the St. Vincent de Paul Charity at the same time as he was head of the World Trade Organisation.

Whitehall issued a Queen's Letter for charity early in 1847 and many people felt good contributing to it. As the Famine condition worsened in the course of the year, a second Queen's Letter was issued: it was resented and fell flat.

Professor Gray concludes in his picture book, *The Irish Famine*:

"That more was not spent on keeping people alive was due to the triumph of ideological obsession over humanitarianism" (p95).

John Kelly says: "Trevelyan had allowed economic ideology to cloud his judgment" (p143).

Kelly also says (Gray just takes it for granted):

"England, the great heart of Britain, has a proud and glorious history. In the

19th century, she led the world into the modern era" (p338).

Would she have done it if she had recoiled from the task in humanitarian horror every time she was confronted with the brutal effects of it? Are they seriously arguing that she should have left the world of Capitalist Imperialism uncreated? Because *this* is how it was done. And it was England's mission to do it. And Trevelyan was merely the agent of British Providence in Ireland.

Brendan Clifford

Book review: *Michael Collins And The Civil War* by T. Ryle Dwyer, Mercier 2012.

The 'Treaty' And Legitimate Authority

There are a number of problems with this book that are prevalent with most books on the 'Civil War' these days. The narrative presented is that Collins signed a 'Treaty' as it was all that could be achieved at the time, the Cabinet and the Dáil accepted it, and he worked it as it provided the "freedom to achieve freedom". The fly in the ointment in this nice story was de Valera.

But the story has some problems. There was no Treaty signed: there were 'Articles of Agreement' signed. Treaties are signed between independent States, between equals. This was an Agreement based on a British Act of Parliament, the Government of Ireland Act of 1920, between the UK Government and number of people who were never accepted as representing a country. The signatories also acted against the wishes of their agreed Government policy without consulting their Government. It was Britain's 'Treaty' and Lloyd George's Government made it clear—to the point of forcing the 'Civil War'—that it was not there to be used to achieve any more freedom.

If Collins believed that what was on offer was all that could be achieved on 6th December 1921, he did not say so at the Cabinet meeting in Dublin on 3rd December 1921. Griffith did say that the deal was the best that could be got and argued his case: if Collins had supported him, there would have been a totally different outcome to that meeting. Whether that would have meant going back to war or conducting a political retreat, one thing is certain—there would not have been the division that occurred and there would not have been the so-called 'Civil War.'

What did the damage was, not that Collins signed the Treaty, but that he did so without consulting the Cabinet. Those who felt that more concessions could have been won from Britain in the Treaty

negotiations would have abided by a Cabinet decision to sign. It was the unilateral actions by the London delegates that did damage. It seems probable that this is the reason Lloyd George insisted that there should be no further consultations with the Dáil Cabinet: Britain needed to split the Republican forces that had prevented it from governing the country in defiance of the Election results.

Why did Collins not submit the draft Agreement to his Cabinet? Also, when he got back to London after the Cabinet meeting of 3rd December, why did he not attend the next scheduled meeting with the British Government to put the position that the Cabinet had agreed on for next stage of the negotiations? This behaviour is never explained by people like Ryle Dwyer, Tim Pat Coogan etc. They do not do so because it is not a pretty story. The only explanation that makes sense is that given by Lloyd George. After the signing he explained to his assistant, Geoffrey Shakespeare, that Collins was a physically courageous man but such men sometimes lack moral courage in equal measure and Collins lacked it. That is what failed him at the Dublin Cabinet meeting—he lacked what Griffith had. And that is why Griffith never generated the hatred that Collins did.

From then on it was subterfuge and duplicity on Collins's part. He supported the 'Treaty' for the British audience, while seeking to convince Republicans he would and could break it when he decided to do so. But this assumed the British were fools and that he was in charge of the 'Treaty'. It was a double game and Ryle Dwyer says: "Playing this double game came quite naturally to him, but now he seemed to be playing it with everyone—at times possibly even with himself" (p24). This is true. The best part of the book is when the author

gives example after example of this game. The results it had in Northern Ireland were disastrous.

But Ryle Dwyer is hopeless at appreciating the essence of the issues involved in the split over the 'Treaty'. He says:

"But de Valera balked when Collins tried to have the Dáil set up the Provisional Government. It made no practical difference if the British said its authority was derived from Westminster, or if the Irish claimed the authority derived from the Dáil" (p17).

This explains away the essence of the issue, which is that Britain was determined that, if it had to allow a state to be set up in Ireland, that state would be what was later called a "*succession state*" within the Empire. One of the important functions of the succession state was to confirm the legitimacy of, and bear responsibility for, what was done by the State which had appointed it to be its successor.

When some Kenyans who were tortured by the British regime during the Liberation war tried to prosecute Britain for torture they were told that the body they should prosecute was the successor state in Kenya. In other words, the body responsible for the alleged torture was the Government which included members who had been tortured.

The source of the legitimacy of the Government it was arranging to set up in Ireland in 1922 was a matter of great practical difference to the British Government. It monitored implementation of the Agreement it made with Collins and Griffith very closely. The Provisional Government was little more than a Whitehall front right up to the 'Civil War'.

The idea that the Dáil might have taken over the Provisional Government if De Valera had agreed is fantasy. If it had been attempted, Whitehall would certainly have insisted that it should become the Parliament of Southern Ireland under the 1920 Act in earnest.

The idea that the Dáil, which had refused to be the Parliament of Southern Ireland in 1920 and 1921, would do so in a way that satisfied Whitehall in 1922, without splitting, is another fantasy.

The split was inevitable after Collins treated the Dáil Government with contempt and made his own deal with Whitehall in the first week of December 1921. It was inevitable unless Collins was willing to take some "*steps*" and face down Whitehall over them. He was never willing to do that. Whitehall got him on the run and kept him on it until it cornered him into 'Civil War'.

Ryle Dwyer cannot see the wood for the trees in all this.

Jack Lane

An Irish Anti-Fascist RAF Volunteer

And Some Other Stories

Part Five

Michael O'Farrell, Investigations Editor of the *Irish Mail on Sunday*, wrote in its issue of 5th August 2012:

"It's 7.30 on a Wednesday evening and Peter Quinn is leaning against the metal railing at the side of the Roslea Shamrocks GAA pitch in Co. Fermanagh. One mile—a mere 1609 metres away—to the south is the border with the Republic {in Co. Monaghan—MOR} where Mr Quinn would be arrested and imprisoned on sight. The length of just a dozen GAA pitches is all that separates him from the clutches of the Irish authorities. But rather than preparing for another night in a cell behind the walls of Mountjoy Prison as the courts have ordered him to, Peter Quinn is amicably chatting to his friends without a care in the world. His home team—Teemore—is preparing to take the field for their opening game in this year's county championship: having already been to three club games since going on the run three weeks ago, he was hardly going to miss this one... The scene is little different from that repeated in countless GAA clubs throughout the country as club sides compete for the glory of their village—except that in this case many in the crowd are acutely aware of the presence of Ireland's newest, and most notorious, fugitive. They are also intensely protective of him and quick to intervene if anyone unwelcome approaches him. It's now clear, despite the predictions of many, that Peter Quinn has no intention of returning to join his

cousin, Seán Quinn Jr, in prison. And despite being a wanted man with a warrant out for his immediate arrest, he can remain in Northern Ireland—and any other country bar Ireland (sic!)—indefinitely, unless a criminal charge is brought against him and extradition is sought. Embraced and protected by friends, family and a local GAA network—which has openly and brazenly shunned the authority of the Irish State—Peter Darragh Quinn can't be touched. This week, in an interview with Enniskillen's *Impartial Reporter* newspaper, his father Peter confirmed for the first time that his son would not be returning to Ireland (sic!). 'Peter is back in Northern Ireland and he's not going back... his family will not be attempting to persuade him to go back', he said. Peter Quinn Sr is a former GAA president and a former member of the Parades Commission of Northern Ireland. He was also appointed as the chairman of the board of TG4 by Noel Dempsey and is a non-executive director and investor in the Belfast Media Group which runs newspapers in Ireland, Northern Ireland and the US. Yet despite a long association with political institutions and the Government in the Republic, Peter Quinn Sr is now openly challenging the very authority of the Irish Government and courts when it comes to the affairs of his brother, Seán Quinn Sr... Meanwhile his son, Peter Quinn Jr, is 'entitled to go to football matches, as am I, without being photographed', Mr Quinn told the *Impartial Reporter*. The photo he refers

The Treaty: *What British Signatories Said . . .*

Lord Birkenhead, a signatory to the Treaty, speaking in the House of Lords on 8th March 1922, said:

"The Provisional Government is sanguine enough to believe that with the passage of a little time, they will be strong enough to deal with the rebels from their authority . . . I would far rather that they were undertaking that task than that we were, and I believe that if the task is effectively and successfully carried out by them the fact that it should be done by them and not by us, will have resulted in an *economy of English lives...*" (Emphasis added).

And in support of the Treaty a week later Birkenhead declared:

"Does the noble and learned Lord really imagine that if someone had presented Queen Elizabeth [the First] with this alternative . . . if they had said to her: "Would you rather send Lord Essex and British troops to put down the turbulent

population of the South of Ireland, or would you rather deal with a man who is prepared with Irish troops to do it for you, who is prepared to acknowledge allegiance to yourself and who will relieve you of further anxiety and responsibility in the matter"—that she would have hesitated? That is the kind of political development which I observe with great pleasure, and it is being followed at this particular moment."

Michael Collins died on 22nd August. Winston Churchill recalled:

"He sent me a valedictory message through a friend for which I am grateful: "Tell Winston we could never have done anything without him." His funeral was dignified by the solemn ritual of the Roman Catholic Church and by every manifestation of public sorrow. Then Silence. But his work was done." (Chapter on *The Rise Of The Irish Free State* in Churchill's *The Great War*, Volume 3, p1531.)

to was taken during a match at Fermanagh's Kinawley GAA pitch last week and first published in the *Mail on Sunday* last Sunday. The match was a tense and fearsome clash of two strong teams—Tempo and Belcoo—but it also aptly demonstrated the battle lines which have been drawn by the thousands of Quinn supporters in Co. Fermanagh. With the ground packed to capacity, every spectator was greeted at either side of the gate by placards urging everyone to attend a Ballyconnell, Co. Cavan, rally in support of the family last Sunday. In the end, thousands would turn up for the (Cavan) rally, including a number of prominent figures from the religious, political and sporting worlds. There are reports that some reporters covering the protest were threatened and warned as tensions ran high... And for as long as 'Petey' stays North of the border—and protected by his community—the fugitive financier has no problem blending in with his fellow fans at Roslea."

It is quite evident that O'Farrell has as much antipathy towards the people of Cavan as those he met during the course of his investigations in Fermanagh, and would have been quite happy had a Boundary Commission catapulted the Republic's Co. Cavan and the adjacent Co. Monaghan out of "Ireland" (sic) and over the Border, just "a dozen GAA pitches away" to Roslea and beyond. Yet what is also evident from his report is how very much Roslea is thoroughly Irish. There is farce present on many levels in Farrell's narrative.

We have Peter Darragh Quinn "on the run", but *not from the Brits*. Instead we find him seeking refuge in "British jurisdiction" in order to escape the clutches of the Irish Republic. We have the Irish Bank Resolution Corporation [IBRC behaving less like a "morally" transformed Anglo Irish Bank, but rather like Anglo's paramilitary wing, with the overpaid bounty hunters of the IBRC, if not tracking down the loot, at least getting two of their men—the Seán Quinns Sr. and Jr. And we have Roslea GAA Club coming under "siege" from a British newspaper. But this is not an article about the Quinn Group.

I am here citing this Roslea farce as an illustration of what Karl Marx had written in *The Eighteenth Brumaire Of Louis Bonaparte* (1852): "Hegel remarks somewhere that all great world-historic facts and personages appear, so to speak, twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce." This is just as much applicable to parish history as it is to world history. For the Roslea farce had been preceded by the Roslea tragedy: the death in action of Connie Green in the November 1955 Saor Uladh (Free Ulster) attack on Roslea RUC

Barracks, a year before the IRA would commence its own Border Campaign.

Roslea had been chosen for that first military action for reasons rooted as much in history as geography. On 16th August 1995 the *Irish Times* would report on some superficial research as to where US President Clinton (of Cassidy ancestry) might be able to find distant cousins in Ireland. It speculated that "in the tiny village of Roslea, Co Fermanagh ... not one cousin, but at least 40, all of them *Cassidys*" might have been found:

"Up to now, Roslea has been better known to some for violence and controversy over the closing of unapproved Border roads. The village still has checkpoints and a large British army base, while Tricolours flutter from every second lamp-post. It is virtually surrounded by the Border, according to Mr Oliver McCaffrey, manager of the local heritage centre. It is also cut off by hills from the rest of Fermanagh. 'That place isn't in the back of beyond, it's further than that', I was told. In the 1920s the Boundary Commission recommended that the area be ceded to Co Monaghan, but this was never implemented... If Mr Clinton does don galoshes to visit Roslea, he will only be following the example of the last famous visitor, Margaret Thatcher, who wore wellingtons when visiting troops."

But there was a previous history that eluded the *Irish Times*. During the War of Independence, given its geographical positioning, Roslea fell quite naturally within the area of operations of the Co. Monaghan Brigade of the IRA, whose O/C was General Eoin O'Duffy, subsequently Free State Garda Commissioner, Blueshirt leader and first President of Fine Gael. In his 2005 biography, *Eoin O'Duffy—A Self-Made Hero*, Fearghal McGarry related: "There are many accounts of what occurred at Rosslea (sic), but most agree that the trouble began with a belligerent Protestant trader (and 'B-man') named George Lester." In February 1921 Lester had been shot at and wounded, in response to a series of actions on his part against local Catholics, including shooting at a priest. To 'avenge' Lester, there followed a Unionist pogrom against the inhabitants of the overwhelmingly Catholic Roslea, as described by McGarry:

"The (B) Specials retaliated by invading Rosslea (sic) on 23 February, sacking the Catholic part of the town. An outraged O'Duffy told GHQ: 'Every Catholic house was fired into and several women and children had narrow escapes. In some cases an effort was made to burn them alive.' ... (Michael) Collins gave him 'a free hand in the reprisals'. Resolving that they should kill four B Specials and burn down sixteen houses, O'Duffy divided

the targets between three battalions... The raid occurred on the night of 21 March. Fourteen houses were torched and three Protestants, two of them Specials, were killed. ('B-man') Samuel Nixon was the first to die... ('B-man') William Gordon ... was killed next... Finally, Joseph Douglas, who was not a Special and presumably a victim of mistaken identity... The scale ... had the effect that General O'Duffy desired. Local Unionists advised against further reprisals, conceding that the raid 'was directed mainly against Unionists who are members of the B class of the Special Constabulary'." (pp 59-61).

Despite the Boundary Commission view that Roslea should in reality have been included in Co Monaghan, it was retained in Co Fermanagh, adding to the Nationalist majority in that County that earned the undying hatred of those Unionist Powers-that-be who wished for it to be ethnically cleansed. As E.C. Ferguson, Unionist MP in Stormont for Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh, put it:

"The Nationalist majority in the county, i.e. Fermanagh, notwithstanding a reduction of 336 in the year, stands at 3,684. We must ultimately reduce and liquidate that majority. This county, I think it can be safely said, is a Unionist county. The atmosphere is Unionist. The Boards and properties are nearly all controlled by Unionists. But there is still this millstone (the Nationalist majority) around our necks..." (*Irish News*, April 13, 1948).

Ferguson was rewarded for such sentiments by being elevated in October 1949 to the office of Crown Solicitor for Co. Fermanagh.

J. Bowyer Bell wrote of the 1955 Saor Uladh raid on Roslea RUC Barracks as follows:

"In October 1951, Liam Kelly of Pomeroy, County Tyrone, was dismissed from the IRA for planning an operation in Derry city without GHQ consent. Kelly had his own power-base in eastern Tyrone and simply took the local IRA organization with him in a new direction. **He founded Fianna Uladh, a political party which recognized the legitimacy of the Leinster House government.** {My emphasis—MO'R.} In 1953 he was elected to Stormont from mid-Tyrone but immediately arrested, charged with sedition, convicted and sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment. Sean MacBride, eager for a break in the log jam of partition, secured Kelly's election to the Senate in Dublin in June 1954. On Kelly's release on August 19, 1954, he returned to a wild welcome in Pomeroy which included a bloody riot as the police and his constituents struggled over possession of the tricolour... Kelly turned his energies to his 'military arm'—Saor

Uladh" (*The Secret Army—The IRA*, 1970; 1997 edition, p 255).

Bowyer Bell continued:

"GHQ's difficulties with Liam Kelly came back to haunt the IRA in November 1955. According to IRA intelligence, Kelly's Saor Uladh was preparing to hit the RUC barracks at Roslea, Co. Fermanagh... At 5.00 one November morning (the 26th) ... Kelly struck Roslea... The RUC had no idea who had attacked, or if they had suffered any casualties... IRA GHQ in Dublin swiftly issued a denial. It soon became clear to the public that Kelly's Saor Uladh had pulled off the raid. Some felt Kelly had been provoked by IRA sneers ... The second piece of news was that Connie Green, probably Kelly's best man, had been killed and quietly buried. There were those who felt this would be the end of Saor Uladh: a gesture, a strike against the British, was fine, but not at the cost of a life. Kelly did not see it that way and maintained his organisation. His strength lay in East Tyrone, Pomeroy, and Carrickmore, with a few friends and one or two small core units elsewhere. Saor Uladh could probably muster some fifty men... *Kelly was anathema to the orthodox Republicans, not because of the raid, to their minds dangerous and irresponsible, but because of his recognition of the Leinster House government.* {My emphasis—MOR} Politically he was a heretic, more dangerous than a pagan; militarily he was premature." (pp 275-6)

The irony was, of course, that the Saor Uladh Chief-of-Staff was an Irish Government Senator, elected by Fine Gael on John A Costello's instructions, in return for support for his own nomination as Taoiseach of the 1954-57 Fine Gael-Labour Inter-Party Government from Sean MacBride's Clann na Poblachta. As well as the death-in-action of Derryman Connie Green, a decorated British Army World War Two hero, Saor Uladh's other casualty at Roslea was the wounding of the Cork O/C of its Southern Command, the Second World War RAF veteran Kevin Neville.

Tim Pat Coogan wrote of the Saor Uladh perspective as "*militarily, Kelly saw the Northern situation as one to be solved by Northerners*". Southerners like Neville could, however, be included in support of that position. This was in contrast to the IRA, whose Northern Border Campaign was one directed from the South, with Northerners at the receiving end of such orders. Coogan continued:

"The IRA denounced the Roslea raid on the day after it occurred and issued a statement to young men 'not to join sentimental or microscopic organisations such as those who attacked the RUC Barracks at Roslea.' (The IRA also attacked it with equal lack of success on

October 11, 1957—Coogan)... Nor did the public or the IRA know that Connie Green, who had formerly served with the British army and was a member of the Saor Uladh attacking party, had been shot in the raid. His death, or rather the irregularities surrounding the inquest into his death, caused such a storm that Saor Uladh was finally forced to issue a statement in the Fianna Uladh journal *Gáir Uladh* on December 16, accepting responsibility for the raid. *The statement also showed the differences between the IRA and Kelly's group.* {My emphasis—MOR} It said: '*Saor Uladh accepts the Constitution of the Republic enacted on July 1st, 1937, and recognises that Oireachtas Éireann is the sole legitimate authority in Ireland. Saor Uladh is organised solely in the Six Counties. Application of the laws enacted under the Constitution is by the Constitution itself restricted to the Twenty-Six County area. It is apparent therefore that these laws are not applicable in the case of Saor Uladh.*' **These points are clearly at variance with what was then IRA policy.**" {My emphasis—MOR} (*The IRA*, 1970, pp 295-6).

On 1st December 2005 *An Phoblacht* reported:

"Hundreds of republicans, mainly from Counties Monaghan and Derry, but also from other parts of the island, travelled to Carrickroe in North Monaghan on Sunday last to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the death of Connie Green. Saor Uladh Volunteer Connie Green was a native of Derry City. He was mortally wounded by the RUC during an attack on Roslea Barracks on 26 November 1955... Sinn Féin Chief Negotiator Martin McGuinness was the main speaker. He recalled the conditions in the Derry that Connie Green grew up in. He told of deprivation and neglect by the unionist government and said that just as he and others like him had joined the IRA in the late '60s and early '70s so too Connie Green, a decade-and-a-half earlier, had decided that he could not stand by and witness the continuing injustice being fostered on his community and on his country. He paid tribute to Connie Green's comrades, many of whom were in attendance at Carrickroe... At Carrickroe Community Centre people had an opportunity to view a display of newspaper reports and photographs that reported on the attack on Roslea Barracks in which Connie Green lost his life. Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin TD presented Connie's brother Paddy with a framed painting of Carrickroe chapel."

Neither McGuinness nor Ó Caoláin had anything to say about Connie Green's Saor Uladh politics. In a pamphlet issued in April 1955 by its political wing, Fianna Uladh, it had ridiculed as "*fantastic and unrealistic*" the Sinn Féin claim that the Second Dáil was the only legitimate

Government in Ireland. (Quoted by Donnacha Ó Beacháin, *Destiny Of The Soldiers: Fianna Fáil, Irish Republicanism and the IRA*, 2010, p 471). Fianna/Saor Uladh went on to declare itself opposed to Sinn Féin's policy of refusing to recognise the Constitution of Ireland and Saor Uladh argued against that Sinn Féin stance as implying "*the overthrow of the Parliament and Government of the Republic*". From that it can of course be clearly seen that, in view of his abstentionist dogmatism regarding the Republic's bi-cameral Oireachtas, comprising both Dáil and Seanad, there is no way that Jim Lane of the later Saor Éire and other Cork groupings would ever have been let within an ass's roar of Saor Uladh membership by its Southern Command O/C, Kevin Neville. For, far from being an abstentionist, the Saor Uladh Chief-of-Staff, Liam Kelly, was a member of that same Seanad. And he vigorously argued the anti-abstentionist point, as the *Irish Times* reported on September 26, 1955:

"Senator Liam Kelly addressed the first Dublin meeting to be held under the auspices of Fianna Uladh last night. There was some heckling and Senator Kelly was greeted with cheers and booing... Senator Kelly said the big mistake Sinn Féin and the IRA were making was that they refused to recognise the Constitution and the Government in the southern part of Ireland. He was asked by an interrupter why he thought the Constitution here was legal and democratic, and replied that it had been endorsed by the people in a referendum. The fact that the people of the Six Counties were prevented from voting on it did not in his opinion invalidate it... He added that his organisation was building up an army to be used when the time came... The assistant secretary of Fianna Uladh was greeted with cries of 'why don't you fight with the IRA' and 'get behind a gun' ..."

Kelly was not the first Republican paramilitary Chief-of-Staff compelled to think through for himself the need to come to terms with what de Valera had achieved by his Constitution. 2005 saw the posthumous publication of a 1976 memoir by Seán MacBride (1904-1988), which had been edited by his secretary Cairtriona Lawlor and entitled *That Day's Struggle*. MacBride was, of course, the leader of the Clann na Poblachta Party who joined with Fine Gael and Labour in forming the first Inter-Party Government of 1948-51 and who served as its Minister for External Affairs. But in the previous decade he had held quite a different office:

"I became Chief-of-Staff of the IRA more or less by accident, because the then Chief-of-Staff, Moss Twomey, had been arrested. On his arrest, the Army

Council approved me. That was in June 1936. I was appointed very much in a caretaker capacity... Concurrently with all this, the 1937 constitution was being prepared by de Valera... I certainly took the viewpoint that once the 1937 constitution was adopted, the whole position in the country was radically altered. We were then in the position, for the first time, of electing a parliament which did not owe allegiance to the British government, and was free to take the leadership of the country. For the first time there would be an opportunity of doing what Collins had always said, of using the treaty as a stepping stone to the republic. It was on that basis that I decided some time before 1937 that, if the constitution was enacted we should work through it. We should accept any constitution which invested sovereignty in the people of Ireland and work through it to achieve the rest of the independence of the country. As far as the constitution was concerned, I was quite prepared to accept it, and I said so publicly on a number of occasions. I also decided that I would terminate my connection with the IRA as from then" (pp 121-123).

The Dáils that resulted from the 1937 Constitution, vested as they were in the sovereignty of the Irish people, were very different ones from those beginning with the third Dáil that had been subordinated to the British Crown by Treaty *diktat*. So much so, that when they took their seats in Leinster House in 1927, Fianna Fáil TDs refused to refer to it as a Dáil at all. Donnacha Ó Beacháin's *Destiny Of The Soldiers* provides a number of illustrations.

"As was characteristic of Fianna Fáil deputies at the time, on 24 November 1927 (future Taoiseach) Seán Lemass refrained from using the term 'Dáil', preferring instead 'this house'..." (p414).

On 14th January 1928 the Fianna Fáil newspaper *The Nation* reported how Dev "the Republican leader introduced the repeal of the Public Safety Act into the Dublin Assembly" (p 90). How that Assembly should be viewed was made unmistakably clear by (future President) Seán T O'Kelly in an editorial in *The Nation* on 23 March 1929:

"We entered a faked parliament which we believed in our hearts to be illegitimate and we still believe it; and we faced a junta there which we did not regard as the rightful government of this country. We did not respect, nor do we now, such a government or such a parliament; and we entered the latter with the utmost distress in our hearts... Our presence in the 'Dáil' of usurpers is sheer expediency, nothing else" (p 100).

When de Valera sensed the demise of the Cumann na nGaedheal regime, and that Fianna Fáil itself would constitute a

new Government within months, the language changed. On 14th November 1931 Dev declared:

"I said long before we came into the Dáil that ... there was no authority outside this house that was entitled to take human life... We go even further and say that if there no authority in this house to rule then there is no authority in any part of the country to rule—I mean in any part of the Twenty-six Counties" (p 115).

Dev could now afford to speak like that because he was on the eve of an electoral victory mandating him to embark on a programme of action to transform that British-crowned "*Oath of Allegiance*" Assembly into a truly Republican Dáil. As Ó Beacháin relates:

"The first bill that the new government put before the Dáil was for the removal of the oath of allegiance... Regardless of the IRA's scepticism, the progressive dismantling of the Treaty was necessary to demonstrate to Fianna Fáil supporters the fruits of constitutional endeavour. Introduced to the Dáil on 20 April 1932, the Constitution (Removal of Oath) Bill consisted of three main sections. The first section would repeal article 17 of the Constitution of the Irish Free State to remove the provision that made the oath obligatory for members entering the Dáil. The second section would remove article 2 of the Constitution of the Irish Free State (Saorstát Éireann) Act (1922), which made the Constitution subordinate to the Treaty. This provision, known as the 'repugnancy clause', complemented the British view of the Treaty as a final settlement—the end of the 'Irish question'. The third section would delete the provision of article 50 of the Constitution, which compelled the government to introduce amendments to the Constitution only that were within the terms of the Treaty... The Constitution of Ireland, enacted by the Dáil in 1937 and then endorsed by plebiscite ... is de Valera's most enduring legacy. De Valera was determined to rid the state of the stigma of having an imposed constitution, and he wanted to ensure that the new constitution would be seen to have originated in Ireland and to have been approved by its people" (pp 132 and 144).

On the occasion of an April 1933 Arbour Hill commemoration at the graves of the executed 1916 leaders, de Valera declared:

"Let it be made clear that we yield no willing assent to any form or symbol that is out of keeping with Ireland's right as a sovereign nation. Let us remove these forms one by one, so that this State we control may be a Republic in fact and that, when the time comes, the proclaiming of the Republic may involve no more than a ceremony, the formal confirmation of the status already attained" (pp 131-132).

That achievement on Dev's part was recognised in 1937 itself by the soon-to-depart IRA Chief-of-Staff, Seán MacBride. The formal declaration of the Republic in 1949, on MacBride's watch as Minister for External Affairs, was just the icing on the cake. But neither the Official nor the Provisional wings of Sinn Féin/IRA could ever rise to the standards set on that score by Clann na Poblachta's Seán MacBride and Saor Uladh's Liam Kelly. The dreadful rhetoric that accompanied the abandonment of abstentionism by Official Sinn Féin in 1970 will be dealt with in another instalment. But what of the abandonment of abstentionism by the Provisionals in 1986 and the taking up of his Dáil seat by Sinn Féin TD Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin in 1997? If you look up the Sinn Féin website of today you will find a listing of its Dáil members, without any use of inverted commas to imply "so-called". I do not know at what stage of its journey Sinn Féin slithered into such recognition, but slither it did, more out of expediency than conviction. In his maiden speech in the Dáil on 26 June 1997 Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin could not bring himself to admit that he was sitting in any such Parliament:

"Glacaim an suíochán sa chomhdháil seo inniu (I take up the seat in this general assembly today) ... and I welcome the presence here today of my colleagues, Gerry Adams, MP for West Belfast, and Martin McGuinness, MP for Mid-Ulster. I look forward to the day when I will join them and all the others elected by the Irish people as a whole in a national parliament for the 32 Counties."

In other words, Dáil Éireann, or the national parliament, was some institution for the future, so that where he was now taking his seat was not in any Dáil, but in a *comhdháil* or mere general assembly.

Now, if you lack the leap of vision made by MacBride and Kelly in recognizing the 26 Counties sovereignty achieved by de Valera, and insist on contemptuously regarding Dev's Republic as no better than the Treatyite Free State and not worth defending, your present journey of moderation will sooner or later lead you into a trap, with some unforeseen consequences also arising. This is the case with the dreadful speech made in the Northern Ireland Assembly a year ago, on 23rd January 2012, in which Alex Maskey, on behalf of Sinn Féin, supported the Unionist demand that this Republic should apologise to deserters from our National Army during World War Two.

(to be continued)

Manus O'Riordan

The 'Famine' And Intentions

A useful way of putting the event known as the 'Famine' in context is to note how an Italian priest who accompanied Rinuccini to Ireland exactly two centuries earlier in 1645 described what he found here. From his background such a person was naturally, among other things, something of a connoisseur of good food. He was overwhelmed by the Irish cuisine he came across and recorded it as follows:

"The courtesy of the poor people among whom my Lord the Nuncio took up his quarters was unexampled. A fat bullock, two sheep, and a porker, were instantly slaughtered, and an immense supply of beer, butter, and milk, was brought to him; and even we, who were still on board, experienced the kindness of the poor fishermen, who sent us presents of excellent fish and oysters of the most prodigious size in the utmost abundance... I was seated on a cushion stuffed with feathers; and the mistress of the house, a venerable lady, sat down beside me along with her daughters, and offered to kiss me, according to the usage of the country; and had I not explained by signs, that it would not be becoming in one who bore Christ crucified on his breast, and who accompanied the Nuncio as priest, I think they would have been offended.

"The lady then brought me a wooden vessel, a great draught of most delicious milk, expressing the utmost anxiety that I should drink it. As it was of a most excellent flavour, I drank copiously of it, and was quite revived by the draught... we entered upon an immense plain, occasionally diversified with hills and valleys, highly cultivated, and enriched with an infinite number of cattle, especially oxen and sheep; from the latter of which is obtained the very finest of what is called English wool...

"They (the people) give most abundant entertainments both of flesh and fish for they have both in great abundance. They are constantly pledging healths, the usual drinks being Spanish wines, French claret, most delicious beer and most excellent milk. Butter is used abundantly on all occasions with all kinds of food and there is no species of provisions which is not found in great abundance.

"As yet, we have all accommodated ourselves to the usages of the country... There is also plenty of fruit—apples, pears, plums and artichokes. All eatables are cheap. A fat ox costs sixteen shillings (a pistole), a sheep fifteen pence (thirty bajocchi), a pair of capons, or fowls, five pence (a paul); eggs a farthing each, and other things in proportion. A good-sized fish costs a penny (soldo), and they don't worry about selling game. They kill birds

almost with sticks and especially thrushes, blackbirds, and chaffinches. Both salt and fresh water fish are cheap, abundant, and of excellent flavour and for three pauls we bought one hundred and fifty pounds of excellent fish; as pike, salmon, herring, trout, &c all of excellent quality. We got a thousand pilchards and oysters for twenty -five bajocchi.

The horses are numerous, strong, well built, and swift. For five pounds (twenty crowns) you can buy a nag which in Italy could not be got for a hundred gold pieces" (From *The Dublin Review*, March 1845).

It is quite clear that hunger and famine would have been inconceivable in this type of society. And for some reason there were foods that he did not come across such as honey and its derivatives like mead. Maybe that was kept out of sight in deference to his priesthood. But most significantly there is a not a potato in sight!

Yet, two centuries later John Kelly describes a situation that was so awful that one night in late October 1846 in Phillipstown, Co. Offaly—

"...the residents were startled by a piercing, screeching sound. Towards dawn the sound died away and the residents fell back to sleep. The next morning the town awoke to crow mortality. There were dead birds in the fields, on rooftops, in outhouses and gutters. Upon examination, the crows 'were found to have been reduced to skeletons and to have been actually starved to death' (p179).

Anyone who knows anything about birdlife will know that crows are one of the cleverest and most resourceful of birds and the fact that even they succumbed in the Irish 'Famine' speaks volumes about the condition that society was reduced to.

The question that needs answering by anyone dealing with the 'Famine' is to give a satisfactory explanation as why there was such a change in the country's condition. Despite his obvious knowledge of the facts about the situation Kelly does not provide that explanation.

Kelly is also good in describing the change of policy introduced after the new Liberal Government that came to power under Lord John Russell in July 1846. This policy was introduced by Russell who explained that it did not commit the Government to doing what "...is im-

possible, I mean the feeding of the people" (p127). It is not rocket science to deduce that, if a Government decides not to arrange for feeding people who are starving, they will die. Russell's Cabinet were well aware of this and it was recorded that a shiver went around the Cabinet at the inevitable implications.

Kelly quotes the Chancellor of the time, Sir Charles Wood, from a letter he wrote to Russell to ensure he kept to his policy, in which he advised that "*We shall need iron nerves to go through with it*" (p127). And they did keep their nerve and millions died.

Yet, a major theme of Kelly's book and one he is at pains to assert is that British Government policy cannot be described as Genocide. He practically begins and ends his book on this theme. In the introduction he says "...*a deliberate policy of genocide in Ireland has been discredited*" (p3). But he does not provide the proof that it has been discredited. His book provides plenty evidence to the contrary as the above extracts alone show.

It is now easier to establish whether it was Genocide or not because we now have a working and accepted definition of Genocide that helps us to assess the accusation. It is defined in Article 2 of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948) and says:

"In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."

The most cursory knowledge of the facts of the 'Famine' would meet every single one of these conditions and it is amazing that with his obvious knowledge Kelly does not accept the accusation. He ends his book with the claim that "*the intent of those policies may not have been genocidal, but the effects were*" (p338). So, the people who created and implemented those policies did not know what they were doing! They did not know that night followed day. Apparently, the British Empire at its height was run by ignoramus!

Instead of the Genocide explanation he says that “*What turned a natural disaster into a human disaster was the determination of senior British officials to use relief policy as an instrument of nation building in one of the most impoverished and turbulent parts of the Empire*” (p3).

This is not elaborated on but it begs some questions. What nation are we talking about? British officials were certainly not ‘determined’ to build an Irish nation. *Au contraire*. The ‘determination’ was to build a British nation in Ireland. Mr. Kelly seem to counterpose a policy of Genocide to a policy of nation building but the two were complementary and inseparable in the Anglo Saxon world and in its offshoot, Anglo America.

As an American Mr. Kelly must be surely aware of that most basic fact in the building of the nation that is now America. And he should be aware from his knowledge of 19th century Ireland of the direct comparison with what was happening to the native Americans that were made and often quoted as to what should happen to the native Irish to ensure proper nation building. The Irish should become as rare in Ireland as a native American in the streets of Manhattan as it was so succinctly put by *The Times*.

Nation building and Genocide went hand in hand—they were one and the same thing and while one sounds more benign, its use in this context makes it just another weasel word to describe what the Famine/Holocaust was about.

To get back to the reason for the contrast between 1645 and 1845. The contrast was that in the former period there was a functioning society that, even though it had been by then under attack (i.e. subject to nation building) for half a century, it was still resilient enough to be functioning and doing what any functioning, organic society does while hardly thinking about it—feed its people in a land of plenty.

After two centuries of unremitting ‘nation building’ by England that society was no longer functional. But the nation builders had failed to build their alternative nation here leaving the mass of the people in the worst of all worlds. They were dispossessed clansmen, dispossessed of their land but, what was more important, dispossessed of a social order, structure and leadership that had maintained and developed itself across millennia. That was why Irish society had degenerated into a subsistence economy with inevitable consequences.

Jack Lane

Letter, *Sunday Independent*, 13.1.13

Trinity Union Jackery Akin To Swastika Over Prague

Incisive analysis by Butler missed

Ronan Fanning is, of course, entitled to pass any judgement he likes on Charles Haughey’s response to the Falklands War. But a Professor Emeritus of Modern History should stick to the facts and not engage in myth making *en route* to his polemical destination, as when he writes of “Haughey’s anti-British instincts, first publicly exemplified by his role as a student in burning the Union Flag hoisted over Trinity College on VE Day in 1945” (*Sunday Independent*, December 30, 2012). The fact is that Ireland’s national Tricolour was the only flag set alight over Trinity College that day by one of the Empire Loyalist pups who had first raised the Union Flag above it. The latter flag remained intact, but in response to the Trinity provocation some protesters, including Haughey, set another Union

Flag alight on the street below.

A patriotic Irish Republican response to that Trinity provocation was expressed as follows a fortnight later: “To get the TCD episode into proportion, let us, therefore, look for its equivalent in some other small nation with an unassimilated minority. Let us suppose that ‘an excited schoolboy, who should have known better’, from the Sudetenland, were to hang a swastika in pre-war days from the famous University of the German ascendancy in Prague. Would the Czechs dismiss it with ‘Boys will be boys!’?” (*Irish Times*, May 21, 1945). These words of wisdom from the self-described Protestant Republican Hubert Butler were very much to the point in recognising the essential equivalence of such “Croppies Lie Down” Union Jackery and Nazi flag-waving over those regarded as *untermenschen*. Regrettably, successive editors have failed to include this incisive analysis by Butler in any of the editions of his writings that have been regularly published over the years.

Manus O’Riordan

New from *Aubane Historical Society*

The Irish Bulletin

The Irish Bulletin was the official newspaper of the Irish Government during the War of Independence. Its aim was to provide those outside Ireland with the Government’s case and the facts of the war that it had to wage. It was necessary for the Irish Government to wage war because the British Government refused to dismantle its state apparatus in Ireland after it lost the General Election in 1918.

Britain tried to suppress the elected Irish Government and to fill the world with false information about what was happening. *The Irish Bulletin* was produced to set the record straight. Despite being the paper of the democratically legitimate Government, it had to be produced as an underground publication because of the attempt of the Occupying Power to suppress it.

It was produced with minimal resources, and was unadorned. This is what made its reputation and because of that it became one of the most powerful weapons in the War that eventually proved successful.

It deserves an honoured place in Irish history yet it has never been republished and it is hardly referred to by our contemporary historians—and when it is—it is almost inevitably in disparaging terms.

This is the first volume of the paper reproduced as faithfully as possible to the original. Other volumes will follow.

This is available from the Athol Books site, or from the address on the back page. The book is available post-free in Ireland and the UK.

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On 14th January RTÉ Radio 1 Pat Kenny said he would be interviewing Colonel Tim Collins regarding the Continuity IRA threat to Irish serving in the British Army. Whatever about the current lot of Irish mercenary soldiers, Blair-clone Collins is complicit in Iraq war crimes. **Philip O'Connor** sent the following text to Pat Kenny before the programme:

British Soldiers

Describing the British Army as a "*career choice*" is a strange use of language. Whatever about "*helping people*", the fact is that an army is not the Vincent de Paul—soldiers are people trained to kill in the service of a state. There is a straight-forward English word for people who join the armies of countries other than their own for pay: "*mercenary*".

As regards Colonel Tim Collins, you should quote what he actually said to his troops during the illegal Anglo-American invasion and destruction of Iraq at huge cost in (mostly Iraqi) human life. It comes very close to complicity in war crimes:

"There are some who are alive at this moment who will not be alive shortly.
Those who do not wish to go on that journey, we will not send.
As for the others, I expect you to rock their world.
Wipe them out if that is what they choose.
But if you are ferocious in battle remember to be magnanimous in victory."

(See: <http://journal.dajobe.org/journal/2003/03/collins/>)

Letter, *Evening Echo*, 31.12.12

Poppycock

James McKeon says the wearing of the poppy is to remember all those, including the Irish, who died in World War 1. He says it has nothing to do with the British army, and that the 50,000 Irish who died were fighting for justice.

Assuming a one for one kill ratio, the Irish in World War 1 must have killed about 50,000 men from the opposing countries—Austrians, Turks, Germans, Hungarians and others. If Mr. McKeon is right, then the young men killed by the Irish soldiers were fighting AGAINST justice. Does the poppy commemorate these as well?

Why were these men fighting and killing each other? Why did they not just stay at home and live in peace? In fact, would it not be better to commemorate and honour the people who refused to get involved in the slaughter? The world would now be a better place if everybody had stayed at home in 1914.

So why did these young Irishmen leave their homes and travel to other countries to slaughter other young men? Was it for justice? None of the countries they were fighting against had invaded or attacked them. What was it all for?

In his 1914 speeches, John Redmond urged them not to "confine their efforts to remaining at home to defend the shores of Ireland from an unlikely invasion" but to go "wherever the fighting line extends, in defence of right, of freedom, and religion in this war".

One of the places where Irish soldiers defended "right, freedom, religion" was in Gallipoli. In alliance with Russian armies, Irish soldiers invaded Turkey. Turkish soldiers defended their country bravely against overwhelming forces and fought on until all invading troops were finally expelled in 1922. Which side was fighting for justice?

What about justice and religion for "poor little Catholic Belgium"? This is the Belgium that was exposed by Roger Casement for the central African holocaust of millions of slave labourers. And nearly fifty years later Irish soldiers still had to die in the Congo trying to clean up Belgium's mess.

Unlike the soldiers of other countries, the Irish soldiers were not conscripted. They chose to fight, they were not forced to the slaughter. Why did they do it?

It is common knowledge that many of them were poor, and signed up for the pay. In other words, they killed for money. Others are said to have signed up out of a spirit of adventure. So they killed for pleasure. Should mercenaries and psychopaths be honoured, commemorated, and held up as an example to follow?

It is quite possible that some of them actually believed Redmond and thought they were fighting for "justice, freedom and religion". If that is the case they should be, not honoured, but pitied for their gullibility.

Certainly we should remember the Great War deaths—as a horrific warning of the harm that is done by war-mongering propaganda. But I don't think that is what Mr. McKeon has in mind.

Pat Maloney, *Labour Comment*

Letter submitted to *Irish Times*, 5.1.13

Sad reflection

Your report that David Andrews is not only to sell "his" signed copy of the Good Friday Agreement to the highest bidder Whyte's can find for him (5th January), but also that he had sought to keep his identity as seller of the document strictly secret, casts him in a rather sad light. The notion that such an historic political document can be regarded as the personal property of a former politician (and rather ineffectual Minister), and not the property of the people of Ireland is outrageous. Following your revelations he should now do the decent thing of withdrawing it from auction and gifting it to the National Museum.

Philip O'Connor

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

LANGUAGE SKILLS

It just does not stack up that even after forty years in the EU we in Ireland have a majority of people who can communicate in one language only—English. It makes no sense at all that young people are leaving schools and colleges without having the language skills to communicate with 300 million other EU citizens in their own language. We need to do business with countries such as France, Germany, Italy, Spain *et al* in their languages if we are to fully realise our potential in their markets. These people want to speak and communicate in their own languages and they do so by preference. They speak English only on sufferance and for their own commercial advantage when they are selling services or goods to us. The tourist business is the most obvious example of our blindness to linguistic opportunities. Look at how relaxing it is to be handed a Menu in English in a German or French restaurant. They want to sell and we want to eat and so they make it easy for us. In Ireland, on the other hand it is very rare to find a restaurant with a Menu in German or in any language other than English. Why do have to be so arrogant and indeed ignorant? The foreign visitors do feel more welcome if we use their language when dealing with them—it's a given and we are ignoring it at our peril.

A small minority of successful Irish business people do send their children to universities such as Rennes, St. Gall, Santiago or Florence for a year to acquire language skills and there is a grant system in Irish universities to facilitate this but while it is a start it is not enough. What is needed is a language syllabus in schools from primary level upwards. Competence in English, Irish and at least one other European language should be required. Incompetence should not be tolerated as it has been in the past, where Irish was taught for seven years in Primary schools without children being able to converse in Irish at the end of the seven years! We need Irish for our heritage, history and cultural self-respect and we need a modern European language in addition to English, so as to broaden our commercial and business prospects and to take full advantage of the EU marketplace for jobs and careers. Learning a language is child's play. Even babies do it!

LEGAL SYSTEM

It is the unfortunate state of our legal system that drew my thoughts to our lack of language skills. Other European countries—other than the UK that is—have developed strong legal systems the like of which we are badly in need of. The English legal system

which we inherited favours property owners, capitalists and bankers because it was created substantially by those classes of people. The English legal system favours the lawyers above all. We have only to look at the frauds and misfeasance perpetrated over the past twenty years and ask how many bankers have been jailed? How many Chartered Accountants have been jailed? Some few lawyers have been found guilty but not many and those mostly because they dipped into money which other lawyers should have got. A headline on January 24th 2013 described how outrageously inept our legal system is by stating:

"Anglo trial can't proceed until 24 million files are examined" and "a mountain of documents—24 million—will have to be examined before the former Anglo-Irish Bank chairman Seán Fitzpatrick and two senior executives can go to trial".

There are 16 charges which are linked to loans of €451 million in an alleged plot involving a golden circle of clients of Anglo, hand-picked (weren't they the unlucky ones!) to invest in Anglo shares to prop up the share price. Allegedly Anglo-Irish Bank gave loans to the persons in the golden circle so as to enable each of them to buy Anglo shares. On 23rd January 2013 in Court it was explained to Judge Mary Ellen Ring that all the 24 million documents would have to be examined by the prosecution lawyers and then to be given to the defence lawyers and be examined by them and all this would take a lot of time (i.e. money, for the lawyers). The Judge set a trial date of 13th January 2014 and said: *"If you can't get it done in 12 months, it says something about the whole of the system"*.

There was little the Judge could do in the circumstances. Defendants are entitled to defend themselves. The lawyers on all sides were agreed (as they would!) that *"the trial will be considerably more complex than any previous case"*.

On the face of it, the conduct of lawyers generally seems to be getting more and more daring and outrageous. Consider the facts so far in this case: the alleged deeds were done in July 2008, the bank collapsed in 2008. Surely the alleged offences have been investigated since 2008? The 16 charges were issued last October, which is three years later. The charges would surely not be brought to trial last October without the allegedly incriminating documentation being complete and available to prosecuting lawyers, to defence lawyers and to the Judge. And so why are we now 3 months later again talking about a further 12 months to examine, discover and peruse 24 million documents? With 3 defendants, 16 charges and 10 members of the *"golden circle"*, surely say 100 documents would be enough evidence or even say 1000 documents or even 10,000 documents. But 24 million documents! Is the taxpayer going to get the bill for all of this? Will there be a few more

millionaire lawyers at the end of the case?

Was there anything like 24 million documents in the whole history of Anglo-Irish Bank? Given that each document takes an average say 15 minutes to create, it would take 6 million hours to create all these documents. It would take 3,388 man-years to create them. Impossible!

The lawyers said in Court that each side would need to examine 24 million documents. There are four sides—prosecution and three defendants and so that is four examinations of each document and if each careful examination takes an average of 10 minutes—i.e. 40 minutes for each of 24 million documents? You can see where we are going here—it would take 16 million man-hours equal to 9,034 man-years to just examine the 24 million documents. (There are 253 working days in the year if the annual holidays are not counted.)

Judge Mary Ellen Ring has given a year for what the lawyers said were 24 million documents to be examined and on my optimistic calculation it would take 9,034 legal people to examine the documents without taking any holidays in the coming year. If legal people take 15 days holidays in the next year the manpower required will be 9,604 legal people.

Given that all the documents for a successful prosecution should have been in the prosecutor's hands when the charges were sent for trial in October 2012, it is now an obvious impossibility on 23rd January 2013 for the lawyers to have 24 million documents circulated and adequately examined by 13th January 2014. *Prima facie* the Court is being abused and it would seem to me that Judge Ring may consider it appropriate to recall the parties and re-examine the realities of the case.

The Director of Corporate Enforcement meanwhile has asked the High Court Mr. Justice Peter Kelly—for a three year extension of orders concerning Anglo-Irish Bank's documentation. Maybe the Director was being more optimistic? Or maybe he has only 3,200 legal people? In any event Justice Peter Kelly gave the Director a year to January 2014 lest there be any reduction in the "intensity" of the probe.

There is no doubt that these documents are very busy doing the rounds.

And so is it any wonder that I should feel the old English legal system we have inherited seems to be not fit for purpose, and my mind turned towards the linguistic abilities of, in this case, innovative lawyers who might examine other European legal systems and, taking the best from each of them, devise a new and more definitive legal system for us. Of course the phrase *"innovative lawyers"* in our system might some would contend—to be the most oxymoronic phrase of them all?

Michael Stack ©

GUILDS continued

corporations and guilds. Notwithstanding this Act, Catholics were rigorously excluded from both the corporation of Dublin and the city guilds. During a period of more than forty years from the passing of the Act not a single Catholic was admitted to the civic franchise." (p.249)

REFORM ACT OF 1832

"The Reform Act of 1832 weakened the position of the guilds in their political aspect. A large extended parliamentary franchise was created by this Act. The power of the new voters reduced that of the guild brethren to comparative insignificance." (p282)

"As a result of the Report of the Municipal Corporations Commission an Act was passed for the reform of the municipal system throughout Ireland. This Act, the Municipal Corporation (Ireland) Act of 1840, struck a death blow at the guild system, in Dublin. The year 1840 marks the end of the guild system. The guilds disappeared within a year or two from the passing of the Act as effectually as if they had been thereby dissolved, although the only reference in the Act is in one section which provided for the disposition of the property of the guilds." (ibid.)

"The secret of their dissolution lay in the provision of the Act of 1840 whereby the old civic franchise was swept away and in its place was substituted a broad democratic franchise which placed the government of civic affairs in the hands of the whole body of burgesses. By this Act all male inhabitant householders occupying premises of the yearly value of £10 who should have paid the rates assessed on such premises were directed to be admitted to the role of Burgesses. Incidentally, they also acquired the Parliamentary franchise." (ibid.)

"For more than a century the main purpose served by the guilds has been to act as a stepping stone to the civic and parliamentary franchise. Prior to the passing of the Municipal Corporations (Ireland) Act the bulk of the freemen of Dublin had been admitted through the medium of the merchant or craft guilds. This privilege of the guilds was abolished by the Act with the result that the guild structure collapsed." (*The Guilds of Dublin*, p283.)

Continued next issue.

Authorities: *Historic And Municipal Document Of Ireland* by John Thomas Gilbert (1829–1898); *The Gild Merchant* by Gross; *De Rebus Eblanae* by Monck Mason, Municipal Library, Charleville Mall, Dublin, p72).

TRADE UNION NOTES

INEZ McCORMACK, a leading Northern trade unionist died on 21st January 2013 after a long battle with cancer.

Ms McCormack was a Belfast Protestant who left behind her family's unionist background to become a lifelong activist in the field of civil rights, she rose to become the first female president of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU).

Current President of the ICTU, Eugene McGlone said her track record in women's and human rights was "*unequaled*", adding:

"Her work in promoting the cause of labour and social justice in Northern Ireland was known world-wide..."

As well as being the first woman President of ICTU, she was also the first woman full-time official of the National Union of Public Employees; the first woman Regional Secretary of UNISON; the first woman elected to the Northern Ireland Committee of Congress and its first woman Chair, she left behind a great legacy.

The Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams TD, said she was a fearless opponent of injustice and a determined champion of civil rights, equality, women's and workers rights, and fair employment. He said:

"For decades Inez was a tireless and effective advocate from her days in the civil rights movement in the 1960's and through her years as a trade union leader. She was particularly effective in the USA in support of the MacBride campaign for fair employment in the Six Counties."

PAY RISE! More than 14,000 Dunnes Stores workers will get their first pay rise in six years come February 2013. The supermarket chain has told staff they will get a 3% increase—worth over €600 a year—according to their Union, Mandate.

The company has traditionally refused to negotiate with Trade Unions, and did not turn up for a Labour Court hearing after staff lodged the pay claim on January 17th last.

Nevertheless, Mandate said the company had told staff they would get the wage rise from the second week of February.

The Union filed the pay claim on behalf of its 4,000 members at the chain nine months ago. However, it said the wage increase would apply to all 14,000 staff.

It is worth over €600 to full-time staff, who earn around €23,000 to €24,000 a year.

More than 3,000 Marks & Spencer and 13,000 Tesco workers got wage increases worth up to €700 a year in 2012.

Debenhams recently agreed to a 2% pay increase from 1st September 2012 after its 1,400 staff accepted plans to extend a pay freeze, which has been in place for two years.

"Mandate Assistant General Secretary Gerry Light stated that: 'IBEC is saying that national agreements are dead, but these claims are a case *nouveau* and wouldn't be a bad start to the new year'..." (*Irish Inde*. 17.1.2013)

Hedrick Smith is a dogged assembler of data. Practically every page of his *Who Stole The American Dream?* crawls with numbers, statistics and percentages.

Like this: "*The top 0.1%—about 315,000 people out of 315 million Americans—garner roughly half of*

all capital gains in the US". And this: "*CEO pay... rocketed from 40 times the pay of an average company worker in 1980 to nearly 400 times by 2000*".

ESB workers value their 5% stake in the semi-state electrical supplier at €94 million, half what the Government thinks it is worth, according to the *Irish Independent* (29.10.2012)

The revelation comes after 10,000 workers and former ESB employees were able to cash in shares held since 1996 for the first time.

Last October the Government ordered the ESB to raise €400 million by selling some of its 13 power stations.

Now new figures show that trading in ESB shares held by around 10,000 workers and pensioners through an employee share participation programme (ESOP) has cast serious doubts on the value of the business.

Employees were prepared to pay just €1 a share when the first market for trading in shares was held last month.

That values their 5% stake in the ESB at €94 million, implying an overall value of just €1.88 billion on the company.

It compares with a value of just over €4 billion put on the company in a report prepared for Government last year on the sale of state assets.

The ESB made profits of more the €230 million in the first six months of 2012.

EIRCOM. Thousands of current and former Eircom staff unwrapped a windfall share of €40 million prior to Christmas 2012. The majority of staff are members of the Communications Workers' Union.

A Trust set up for the workers 14 years ago when its predecessor, Telecom Eireann, the national telecommunications company was about to hit the stock market made its final payment among the more than 14,000 former and current employees.

The final distribution to the members brought their total bonanza since 1998 to €900 million, and it's all been tax-free.

The December payment came on top of an average €8,000 each they received from the Trust during the Summer of 2012, when €85 million was divided among them.

The Trust acquired nearly 15% of Eircom in 1998 on behalf of employees before the company, then Telecom Eireann, floated on the Stock Exchange in 1999. It acquired most of the stake using €127 million in funding from Eircom and a €121 million loan from a Swiss bank. At one stage, the Trust owned nearly 30% of Eircom.

On average, each member of the Trust has received up to €70,000 each tax-free since it was set up, depending on when they joined.

Although the Stock Market flotation of Telecom Eireann was deemed an all-round disaster—with hundreds of thousands of investors nursing heavy losses—members of the Trust made a killing as a result of subsidiary Eircell being acquired by Vodafone and two subsequent takeovers of the company.

The Trust—which is set to be wound up March, 2013—is distributing tens of millions of euro worth of Vodafone shares or proceeds from their sale to the 14,000-plus members.

In agreement with the Revenue Commissioners, it had originally been decided that the Trust would be wound up in 2014.

But debt-ridden Eircom entered examinership in March this year after lenders agreed to allow it time to restructure its finances. That examinership—the largest ever in Ireland's history—saw Eircom reduce its debts from €4 billion to €2.35 billion.

GUILDS continued

government behind it So far was the Guild Merchant from being a branch or department of the municipal government of Dublin that the civic authorities levied cess {tax} upon the Guild and borrowed money from it, to recover which, the Guild on one occasion threatened an action against the Common Council. The Guild Merchant of Dublin was, in fact, coeval with, distinct from, and subordinate to, the civic government. Subject to these limitations, the latter part of the definition, namely, that the duty of the Guild was 'to maintain and regulate the trade monopoly' applies." (p32)

NO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

"The Guild Merchant was not a mere association of traders, like a modern Chamber of Commerce. The Guild was a great trading corporation, buying and selling goods on a large scale. It dealt not in bales of cloth, barrels of wine, and hundred-weights of salt and iron, but by the ship load. It bought for its members collectively on a large scale, and apportioned the purchase amongst them according to their requirements." (p32)

WAGE AND PRICE CONTROL

"The Guild authorities fixed the price at which the brethren were to sell the merchandise which formed the subject of these common purchases indeed the citizens generally, were forbidden to anticipate the city buyers in purchasing any of these goods brought to the city for sale. Nor could they offer a higher price than the buyers offered." (p36)

THE CRAFTSMEN

"By the end of the fifteenth century the craftsmen of Dublin had arrived at a certain degree of organisation. The followers of different crafts had become organised into distinct bodies capable of corporate action and taking part in the corporate capacity in the life of the city. One of the most interesting records of mediaeval Dublin is that the law regulating the pageant that was held in the city on Corpus Christi Day—a pageant that for sheer picturesqueness can scarcely have been excelled in any town in Europe. To this pageant the Guild Merchant and the various bodies of craftsmen contributed, each in the allotted manner." (p53)

None of the records which have survived of the Craft Guilds dates back as early as those of the Guild Merchant, though a bye-law of the year 1454 points to the existence of a general organisation of the crafts. Mention is made in a civic law of the year 1484 which leaves no doubt that Butchers were organised in a Guild of their own at that time or even earlier.

The following crafts had their charters before or during the 16th century: Smiths; Barber-Surgeons; Bakers; Cooks; Tanners; Tallow Chandlers; Glovers and Skinners; Weavers; Carpenters &c.; and Shoemakers. The crafts of the carpenters, masons, joiners and slaters, were all united in a single fraternity or Guild.

The Shoemakers were granted a Charter in 1427 by Henry XI of England. The Guild went under the name of "The Fraternity or Guild of the Blessed Mary". They were empowered to hold lands of the clear yearly value of £10.

"This charter was subsequently confirmed in a Parliament held at Trim on the Monday next after the feast of St. Lawrence, 5 Edward IV. An exemplification of the charter was granted by Henry VIII. in the eighth year of his reign at the request of Michael Harris and Thomas Walsh masters of the art of shoemakers." (p67)

The craft of weaving was probably one of the earliest to be organised in Dublin.

The crafts mentioned above are the only crafts appearing in the municipal records down to the year 1600 as having a guild organisation. The organisation is styled variously "fraternity", "brotherhood", "fellowship", "occupation", "company" or "corporation." The term Guild is not yet used as a common designation for these bodies.

Webb reckons that the best account of the everyday life of the craft Guilds down to the close of the sixteenth century can be best learned from the history of the tailors. "*The records of no other guild contain such a mass of vivid and illuminating detail.*" (p.76)

BREAK-UP OF GUILDS

"The period from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the year 1840 when the guild system in Dublin finally broke up was a period of progressive decline. The guild system remained in operation for over six hundred years. So firmly was it established that it lingered on in Dublin much later than in other countries. The commerce of the city was for centuries in the hands of the Guild Merchants. All the more important crafts were organised under the guild system. Several contributory causes led to the downfall of the Dublin guilds, any one of which causes would have ultimately led to their destruction.

"Notable amongst these was the decay of the fraternal spirit which had at one time animated the guild brethren and the substitution for the fraternal bond of the cash *nexus* between employer and employed. In Dublin as elsewhere the spirit of capitalism made its appearance and produced on the part of the workers

combinations against their masters met by repression on the part of the latter." (p241)

The exclusion of Catholic merchants and craftsmen from the Guilds, a policy which was persisted in throughout this period, was another potent cause of decline. It resulted in large numbers, in fact a majority of the merchants and craftsmen, carrying on trade and working at their crafts illicitly so far as the civic laws and guild regulations were concerned. The Guilds no longer exercised a monopoly over commerce and industry. The preservation of that monopoly was essential to the life of the Guilds.

NEGLECT OF CRAFTS

"Neglect of the crafts with which the guilds were associated contributed as much as any other cause to their downfall.

"Rather do they seem to have degenerated into political clubs and to have made politics not business their object." (p242)

In the latter half of the eighteenth century politics dominated the guild system.

Another factor in the demise was the admission to the guild system of people totally unconnected to business or the trades. These people used the Guilds as a stepping stone to the civic franchise, the possession of which gave to the holders a voice in the selection of both municipal and parliamentary representation. This practice was completely at variance with the cardinal principle underlying the guild system—the association of fellow craftsmen for the regulation of their industry with a view to their mutual betterment.

A Commission at the time made reference to the Tailors:

"The trade is numerous in the city of Dublin, and the majority of it are not members of, or connected with the guild, and it did not appear that the trade derives the slightest advantage from the existence of the guild." (p280)

Catholic merchants and craftsmen were excluded from the Guilds throughout the eighteenth century. The by-laws of the Guilds and the oaths taken by freemen on admission were aimed at excluding Catholic boys from being initiated into the mysteries of any art or craft in the City of Dublin: "*You shall not take any Apprentice but of the Protestant religion, and for no less term than seven years*" stated the Feltmakers' bond.

"An Act of the Irish Parliament passed in the year 1793 removed restrictions on Catholics with regard to admission to

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"The keynote of the Guild System was exclusiveness. None but a member of the Guild Merchant could practise the art of Merchandise. Neither tanner nor tailor, butcher nor baker could practise his craft outside of the fold of the guilds. For six hundred and fifty years the guild system endured in Dublin. Told from their own records, the author gives a fascinating account of the everyday life of the merchants and craftsmen who walked the streets of Dublin during bygone centuries" (*The Guilds Of Dublin*, John J. Webb, MA., LL.D., London : Ernest Benn Limited, 1929).

Mondragon, Part 16

The Dublin Guilds (II)

The English Pale was the term applied to the region around Dublin, where English rule operated after the English settlement of Ireland in 1171. Twenty-one years later, 1792, England's Prince John granted a Charter giving the city the right to have Guilds.

The area was equated with "*the four obedient shires*" around the city. In this lowland region, comprising the mediaeval Counties of Dublin, Meath, Louth and Kildare which later continued the English rule, conditions more closely accorded with contemporary lowland English norms in respect of language, culture, law, social structures, and government than any other part of the English dominions.

It was probably inspired by the defensive arrangements at Calais where the first reference to a 'Pale' occurs in 1494. Sir Edward Poynings was then Deputy Lieutenant at Calais, he was later appointed Governor of Ireland and applied the term to the Dublin region because of its similar character to the French town.

The term was recognized politically until the early 17th century, when mediaeval boundaries were overtaken by the Plantation of Ireland 1556-1660.

The phrase "beyond the Pale" derives from the English Pale. The English settlers living inside the Pale in Ireland considered themselves to be cultured and law-abiding, while the Gaelic Irish living outside the Pale were viewed as barbarians, uncivilized and lawless. Hence when someone behaves in a manner that is beyond the bounds of acceptability they are said to be "*beyond the Pale*" and the native Gaels were certainly beyond Guild membership.

In last month's *Labour Comment* we published an essay written in 1917 by

John Joseph Webb on the Guilds of Dublin. In 1929, Mr. Webb wrote a comprehensive account titled *The Guilds Of Dublin*, published by Ernest Benn in London. In this article we will refer to some of the structures of the Dublin Guilds which functioned for over six hundred years in that city, also, Mr. Webb's account of the impact of the Protestant Reformation on the Guilds and finally their demise in 1840.

COMMON COUNCIL & GUILDS

"The Mayor, Bailiffs and citizens of Dublin were a corporation by prescriptive right. The Guild Merchant and the Craft Guilds were also corporations, but lesser corporations, strictly subordinate to the great corporation of the city. The Master of the Guild corresponded to the Mayor, the Wardens to the Bailiffs, while the Common Council {city/town council} through which the municipal corporation acted had its counterpart in the Council of the House, the ruling body of the Guild." (p103)

"Like the Corporation of the City, the Guild had corporate property and administered its own finances. The Guild made by-laws within its own sphere. Its by-laws were enforced by sanctions as were the laws of the city. The Master and Wardens acted in a magisterial capacity as did the Mayor and Bailiffs. The former imposed fines upon or sentenced to imprisonment offenders against the ordinances of the Guild as the Mayor and Bailiffs did in the case of offences against the civic by-laws. In short, the whole organisation of the Guild was modelled upon that of the corporation of the city.

"Over all the Guilds and over every detail of Guild administration the Corporation of Dublin, through the Common Council, exercised an over-riding authority. Between the guildsmen and the citizens generally the Common Council held the scales of justice evenly. Membership of the Guild conferred a privileged position upon the guildsman. The keynote of the Guild system was exclusiveness. To practise any craft in Dublin it was necessary to belong to the Guild associated with that craft. This exclusiveness was much more strictly preserved by the Guilds than it is by modern trade unions. The result of this exclusiveness was that the guildsmen exercised a complete monopoly over the industry with which they were associated." (p104)

DEFINITION

"Dr. Gross, in his history of 'The Gild Merchants', states: 'The Gild was the department of town administration whose duty was to maintain and regulate the trade monopoly.' This definition does not fit in accurately with the facts of the case so far as the Guild Merchant of Dublin is concerned. Most modern governments administer national affairs through the medium of departments . . . Each department is supreme in its own sphere, and has the power of the whole

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